THE SUPREME COURT ISSUE An Editorial

NEW MASSES

MARCH 9, 1937 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

LaGuardia: Labor Party Mayor?

S. W. Gerson

Regimenting America for War

H. C. Engelbrecht

Whose Sun Is Rising in Japan?

Albert Brown

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

A THOUGHT for this week: a gentleman writes in to the New York *Times* protesting against that nasty thing known as labor agitation. The phrase "the class struggle," says this connoisseur, is just too, too unbearable, and the gains of labor during the past fifty years have been because of right and reason, not because of horrid militancy. The gentleman's name is Hyacinthe Ringrose. . . .

Editor Joseph Freeman is back from Mexico, and there will be a couple of other Mexican articles from his pen next week and the week after, one of which will deal with the La Laguna land-distribution project which was the place of his last visit.

In the course of his trip, Freeman stopped at Havana, where he visited the mother of Pablo de la Torriente-Brau, NEW MASSES correspondent killed in action with the government troops in Spain last December. From her, Freeman learned that the Havana department store El Encanto, which gives annually a thousand-dollar prize for outstanding work in journalism, had made its 1936 award to Pablo.

Mrs. Brau was not at once informed of the death of her son, since there was some uncertainty at first as to whether he was lost or killed. She learned of his death through the NEW MASSES article by him, "Last Dispatch," published in our special Spanish civil war issue six weeks ago, which she read in its reprint version in the Mexican paper *Nacional.* Mrs. Brau asks that all who have original letters or other manuscripts of Pablo's communicate with her at once. Address Graciela Brau, Consulado 33 Bajos, Havana, Cuba.

Hands-across-the-sea is one of the charming ideas which ruling-class propagandists trot out when the imperial interests of that class are served thereby, but they are slow to play up the notion when there is a genuine hands-across-the-sea of a common in-

terest of peoples which has little to do with ruling-class interests. Such was the coming to America of André Malraux, French novelist who has been commanding an air combat squadron for the Spanish government of late. He was at first refused a visa to enter this country, and when he finally arrived, his coming received little notice in the bourgeois press. But when he spoke at the *Nation* dinner last week (at which Messrs. Random House, his publishers, were hosts to the NEW MASSES and others), the burning passion of this Frenchman talking to Americans of the struggles of the Spanish people was a vivid example of the hands-across-the-sea that will one day put a full stop to the imperialist version.

What's What

THE legitimate pride which W. S. Gilbert celebrated swells our chest this week following receipt of news from the New York Public Library that artists who contribute regularly to our pages are prominently represented in the exhibition *Spot Use of Drawings* which will open in the Picture Collection there March 8. Four magazines are represented in the show, the *New Yorker, Esquire, Harper's Bazaar,* and ourselves. Of the thirty-two artists whose work is shown, thirteen are NEW MASSES contributors, including A. Ajay, Darryl Frederick, Getz, Gropper, Sid Gotcliffe, Dan Rico, Theodore Scheel, Anton Refregier, Robert Joyce, and others.

An art competition for children from the ages of six to sixteen, the winners to receive free scholarships for special courses in the American Artists' School in New York, is announced by the International Workers' Order. The judges include Contributor Max Weber, Sculptor William Zorach, Ralph Pearson, and others. Work must be turned in this week.

Poet-Contributor Muriel Rukeyser is one of those who have been published by the Yale University Press in its Younger Poets series. The press announces that it is interested in other mss., from American poets under thirty (who have not previously published a volume of verse), from forty-eight to sixty-four pages in length. Particulars on this competition, which will be open during the month of April, can be obtained from the press at New Haven, Conn. Stephen Vincent Benét is the editor of this contest.

Contributor Harry Weiss, who did the article on the auto strike in our issue of February 26, wishes it known that the editors of the NEW MASSES were responsible for the last paragraph of the article.

Contributor Leo Huberman, author of the current work in economics, *Man's Worldly Goods,* has become a contributing editor of *Science & Society,* the Marxist quarterly.

Contributor A. Walkowitz is vice-president of the Society of Independent Artists, whose annual exhibition will open at Grand Central Palace April 2. Artists who wish to exhibit in this no jury show should communicate with the society at 200 West 57th St., N. Y.

Who's Who

S. W. GERSON, who has contributed to the NEW MASSES before, is the *Daily Worker's* City Hall reporter in New York.

H. C. Engelbrecht makes his debut as a contributor in this issue. He is the author of the well-known *Merchants of Death,* and is now at work on a book to be called *The Revolt Against War,* which will be published early next fall.

Edward Newhouse has been a frequent contributor to our pages, as well as those of other publications, including the *Daily Worker* and the *New Yorker.* His current novel, *This Is Your Day,* has excited much favorable comment.

Hirschfeld's lithograph of the Supreme Court justices which makes this week's cover is on view at the American Artists' Congress satirical portrait show at the A.C.A. Gallery in New York. Aline Fruhauf's presentation of the same gentlemen on page 7 was included in the recent thirty-city show of the Congress.

The painting by William Gropper reproduced on page 17 will be included in his one-man show at the A.C.A. Gallery which opens March 7. The Spanish civil war is the theme of the exhibition.

Arthur McEwen is a member of the staff of Commonwealth College.

Albert Brown is a resident of the West Coast who is in intimate touch with political problems of the Far East.

F. W. Dupee is acting literary editor of the New Masses.

Stuart Greene is a Marxist scholar who has contributed frequently to our pages.

Michael Blankfort wrote the *Anniversary Cavalcade* which was a dramatic feature of our twenty-fifth anniversary celebration in New York in December. He is a contributing editor of *Theatre Workshop.*

Harry Thornton Moore is one of the editors of *Midwest,* the organ of the League of Midwest Writers.

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Flashbacks

ONE of Hitler's Saturday surprises ominously achieves its first anniversary this week. On March 7, 1936, Nazi troops marched into the Rhineland in defiance of the Versailles treaty. . . . Under the watchful eyes of Edsel Ford, police gunfire and clubs mowed down four, wounded sixty shivering hunger marchers in front of the Ford plant at Dearborn, Mich., March 7, 1932. . . . While mountainous bourgeois diplomacy labored and brought forth the League of Nations mouse, the working class gave birth to the most powerful organization in history. On March 4, 1919, the Communist International

was founded in Moscow. . . . New York police entered St. Alphonsius's Church March 4, 1914, attacked and arrested I.W.W.'s Frank Tannenbaum and 189 of his unemployed followers who sought a night's shelter in that House of God. Father Scheider had called in the cops to forestall sacrilege—the Blessed Sacrament of the Body of Our Lord was exposed. . . . "There are three thousand people yonder in the town meeting, and the country is rising," Samuel Adams shouted at the British governor after the Boston Massacre, March 5, 1770. He demanded removal from the city of all British troops. "The country is rising," he said. "Night is coming and we must have our answer." The troops were withdrawn.

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NEW MASSES

MARCH 9, 1937

Soriano

LaGuardia: Labor Party Mayor?

Whether the Little Flower blooms again as New York's chief executive depends on a lot of things, including progressives' aid

By S. W. Gerson

FIORELLO HENRICO LAGUARDIA is probably the most interesting and widely publicized New York character of the thirties, not excepting that well-known Bronx citizen, the late Dutch Schultz, or Gypsy Rose Lee. If he wins no other title, history will surely grant him that of The Ubiquitous Mayor. Whether it's answering fire alarms at 5 a.m., riding in police motorcycle side-cars, addressing graduation classes of merchant-marine academies, or yanking steam-shovel levers, Fiorello is always there. And, in gross violation of hoary political tradition, he generally manages to avoid platitudes and say something relevant.

LaGuardia's knack for getting into the headlines is old business, dating back to the time he was a consular official and mortally insulted royalty. As a congressman, he was a thorn in the side of old-guard Republicans and a joy to copy-hungry reporters. Stormy petrel of the House for many years, he carried on a guerilla warfare within the G.O.P. and was in permanent disfavor with the organization's high command. There was, for example, the time that Representative LaGuardia stood up on his hind legs, took the floor, and pulled from his pocket a lamb chop, waving it aloft as a banner of revolt against the high cost of living.

BACK in 1919, as New York City's aldermanic president, he persistently stole the show from his Democratic colleagues on the Board of Estimate. So much the gadfly was he, that once Comptroller Berry begged Mayor Hylan to "hit the little Wop over the head with the gavel."

His ability to dramatize an issue is a byword in politics. Be it getting arrested on a picket line or denouncing the high cost of electric current in the District of Columbia, the swarthy little man has veritable genius for getting his point across. At last year's Albany hearing on the child-labor amendment, he staged a one-man act that held the audience breathless. Taking a lady's purse from his pocket, he proceeded to demonstrate how child laborers worked on the article, illustrating his remarks by hammering on the table in a painful crescendo that kept his hearers transfixed. So careful is he in preparing effects that he will go to endless bother to establish authenticity. Once he mobilized his entire law office to search for an old, ruined jacket which was to be the text of his open-air stump speech that evening.

His looks, clothes, tastes, and expletives are a boon to reporters. Short, stocky, and swarthy, when walking under his coal-colored sombrero, he resembles nothing as much as a black mushroom in motion. Son of an army band-master, he loves music, goes to the opera often, and can be caught by an alert cameraman at least twice a year leading a band, the baton carving the atmosphere in all directions. Volcanic by nature, LaGuardia can be a grimacing gargoyle one moment and a dimpling cherub the next. To his intimates he can be a charming, witty, cultured companion and a better than average spaghetti chef; to his foes—and even to some of his subordinates—he is an enigmatic holy terror.

NO DOUBT about it, the Little Flower makes swell copy. But it is his policies, rather than his colorful self, that interest socially-minded persons. Lacking a definite *Weltanschauung*—he's miles from being a Marxist,

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Hearst to the contrary notwithstanding—he nevertheless has always regarded himself as a progressive. His congressional record stamped him a foe of Reaction and stuffed-shirtedness. Almost single-handed, he rallied the House to defeat the Hoover-Hearst federal sales tax. As a congressman, he opposed compulsory military training in schools and colleges, and befriended the unemployed. Kicked out of Republican caucuses, he grouped himself with the western progressives, and when denied the G.O.P. nomination in 1924, won with the Progressive and Socialist designations. That year, incidentally, his district, the twentieth congressional, in lower Harlem (now Vito Marcantonio's bailiwick), was the only one on the Atlantic seaboard carried by Robert M. LaFollette.

The Little Flower's reputation as a liberal still lives and thrives west of the Hudson. Last year, Governor Phil LaFollette of Wisconsin, on a trip to New York, told a group of City Hall reporters that "out West we regard LaGuardia as the leader of the progressives." In New York he has the support of most liberals, particularly if it is an issue of LaGuardia vs. Tammany.

His victory over the Tiger in 1933 was something in the nature of a political miracle. Only twice before since the turn of the century had Tammany been licked—and the conquerors had never repeated. Fusion was a strictly one-term phenomenon. But a bitter economic situation in 1933 came to the support of lucky Fiorello. Unemployment, a sinking real-estate market, and a sharp decline in tax payments made it impossible for the sachems to keep the expensive Tammany organization together. Division arose in the machine, partly stimulated by Jim Farley and partly a result of the astounding Seabury revelations.

It was a peculiar ménage, that Fusion movement of '33, so aptly characterized by Communists as "a special kind of third party." Good-government statisticians and "non-partisan" municipal reformers rubbed elbows with needle-trades workers, middle-class taxpayers, and even some representatives of the Four Hundred in the Fusion parade. But it was labor and, above all, the garment unions which contributed the major share to the 1933 victory.

LaGuardia entered office January 1, 1934, with the weight of the peculiar, mixed class composition of his supporters heavy upon him. It is this fact and the Tammany heritage of graft and incompetence that make the present administration scene a many-toned picture, neither deep black nor shining white. There has been, of course, an end to the scandalous boodling that went on in Jimmy Walker's heyday, but the net results have not been such as to cause the waving of flags in the streets. LaGuardia's economy program in the early days of 1934—undoubtedly brought on by the tin-box splurging of his Tammany predecessors—worked hardships on the low-bracket civil-service employees. Passage of the sales tax—for which he and the Tammany-dominated Board of Aldermen must take full responsibility—was a complete retreat from his congressional progressivism. Without a bold tax program—there is no indication that he ever sought powers for one from Albany—city finances were such that the increases given important departments were miserly and not nearly enough for a decent health and welfare program. Occasional sallies were made against the Bankers' Agreement, but on the whole the infamous pact was fulfilled to the letter. While the administration did remove clubhouse control from the Emergency Relief Bureau apparatus, and managed to bring system to the organization, budgets of relief clients did not keep pace with rising prices. Use of police at Home Relief Bureaus, although not of the completely ruthless kind typical of the Walker regime, was bad enough.

On the credit side of the LaGuardia ledger, an objective examination shows some decent appointments and a regard for the merit system unusual to veteran New Yorkers. There can be little quarrel with the naming of public officials like Paul Blanshard, Dr. John L. Rice, Dr. S. S. Goldwater, Professor Russell Forbes, Paul Kern, and Justine Wise Tulin. Certain administrative reforms and the attack upon Tammany patronage nests can also be chalked up to the good. Support by the administration of the new charter and proportional representation, both adopted at the general elections last year, can be regarded as a progressive position of the administration and will further weaken Tammany.

In the field of labor relations, the record of the administration, while spotty, compares favorably with that of its predecessors. Union organization in the public utilities has been facilitated by a clause in all city franchises guaranteeing collective-bargaining rights and outlawing company unionism. It is thanks primarily to that clause, for example, that the Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric Railway, & Motor Coach Employees has been able to make serious advances on the bus lines. Recently, the mayor voided a plan for a virtual company union poll on the city-owned Independent Subway System, and ordered an election in which the tellers were mainly union men. Initial friction with the organized workers in the Emergency Relief Bureau recently gave way to a more coöperative attitude, not, however, it must be recorded, without a good deal of struggle on the part of the E.R.B. workers.

An avowed Voltairean, LaGuardia has been fairly consistent about civil liberties. While police have attacked picket lines on occasion, the mayor has been wise enough to associate himself with a hands-off attitude towards sit-down strikers. Vetoing of the Hearst-inspired flag ordinance, adopted unanimously by the Board of Aldermen, was his high-water mark in the fight against reaction locally.

Hans

"Then I said, 'Suppose Morgan, Mellon, and Rockefeller went on a sit-down strike.' But still they weren't convinced."

Now LaGuardia faces the election campaign without any organization to speak of, and in face of the tradition that no reform mayor has ever been reëlected in New York. Nominally a Republican, he is cordially disliked by most of the titular leadership and the Union League Club element of the organization. But more important is the fact that the new realignment of forces nationally has caused a shifting of forces locally. LaGuardia cannot expect any Park Avenue support next fall. He will have to face a reactionary coalition of Hearst, Tammany, and Liberty League Republicans and Democrats. His support of Roosevelt as given through the American Labor Party separated him definitely from the crème de la crème of the G.O.P. His failure to hand deserving Republicans city jobs has earned him the enmity of most of the organization's district leaders. He will undoubtedly win the Republican designation, however, in any G.O.P. primary, no opponent being strong enough to beat him there.

But the Republican designation in a city with 2,289,213 enrolled Democrats out of an electorate of slightly more than 2,600,000 is something of a joke. The mayor will clearly have to seek support elsewhere. If he gets the nomination of the American Labor Party—that of the City Fusion Party is his, for what it is worth—he still cannot beat a united Tammany. He will need considerably more backing. Some of it will come from the newly-formed Progressive City Committee, composed of a group of well-known liberals headed by the mayor's former Commissioner of Water Supply, Maurice P. Davidson.

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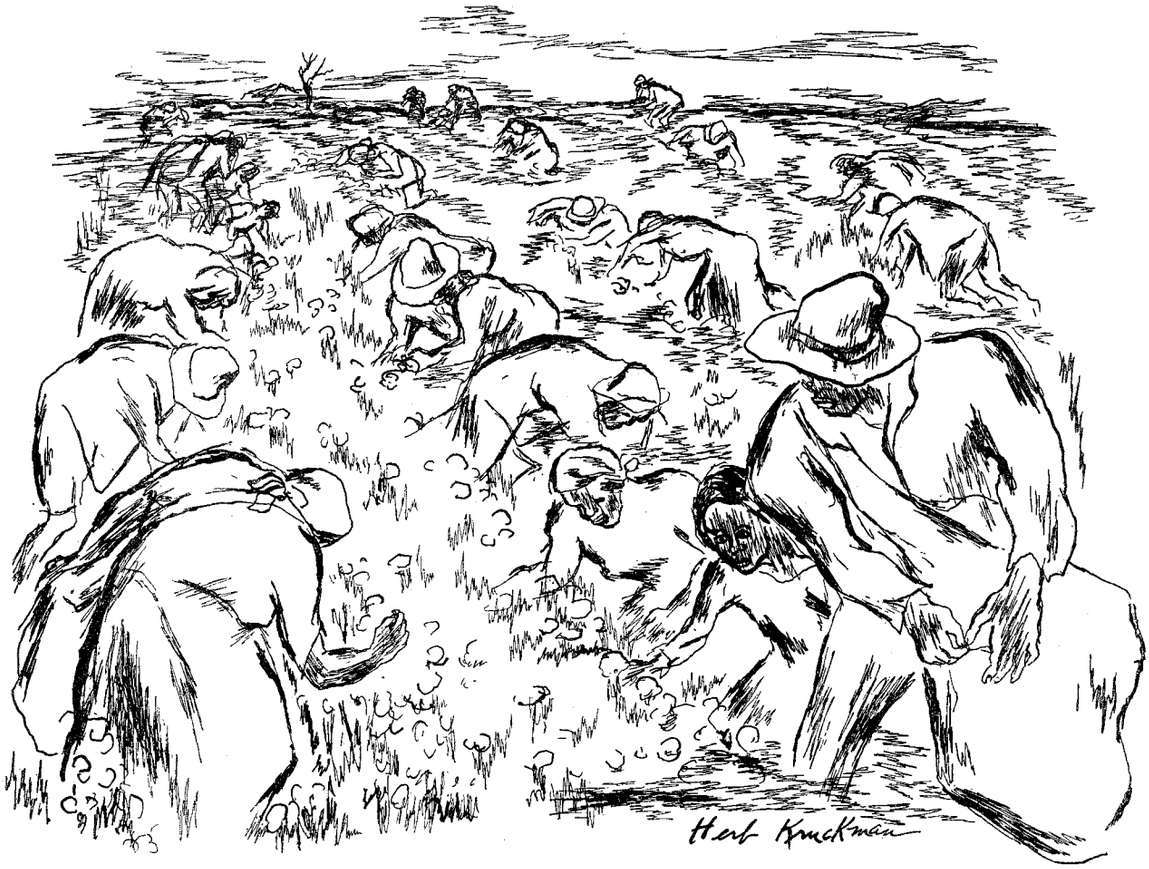

Herb Kruckman

SEEING AMERICA FIRST

VII—Cotton Pickers

But even that won't be enough to win if only one Democratic candidate is in the field. The possibility of an O'Brien-McKee situation, despite the division in Tammany ranks and the Farley-Tammany struggle, must not be exaggerated. LaGuardia will have to seek sustenance from the well-plowed Tammany fields. He will undoubtedly seek to split the ranks of Tammany and maneuver with dissident Democrats.

In this connection, the civil-service vote is of the highest importance. New York, with its half-billion dollar annual budget (it's the second largest governmental spending unit, standing next only to the federal government), employs about 170,000 workers, most of whom are on civil-service lists. They and their families compose one of the most powerful blocs in the city. If their vote, traditionally delivered to Tammany and its allies, can go to LaGuardia or at least be split, the Little Flower is assured of success. This may explain, in part, LaGuardia's signing last December of the mandatory salary-increase bill for civil-service workers in the low brackets. This may explain, also, the persistent rumors of a *rapprochement* with Frank J. Prial, boss of the Civil Service Forum and publisher of the *Chief,* influential civil-service paper. Prial, a Democrat currently feuding with Tammany, may prove to be the wedge that will split a huge chunk off the Tammany vote next fall. Unpleasant though a LaGuardia-Prial alliance is to many Fusionists, it is regarded by them as a political necessity in the present exigency.

FROM the entire situation, it is evident that LaGuardia will have to spend no little time in consolidating the labor and middle-class vote, although the theory has been advanced that since the labor vote is safely his, he can spend his energies wooing upper-middle-class and Park Avenue support. This theory is untenable in view of the mayor's recent efforts to go out of his way to ally himself with labor forces in support of progressive measures like ratification of the child-labor amendment and curbing the power of the Supreme Court. It may be regarded as certain that LaGuardia's 1937 program will be considerably more advanced than that of 1933.

New York labor and progressives, critical of LaGuardia, will, however, undoubtedly concentrate on the defeat of Tammany, by all odds the most reactionary influence in local politics today. Linked with the Liberty League overworld and the racketeering underworld, and strongly influenced by the ultra-reactionary Catholic hierarchy, Tammany has become a repository for fascist currents. It is highly symptomatic that in the presidential campaign, some of Tammany's most exalted leaders, such as Al Smith and former Supreme Court Justice Daniel Cohalan, aligned themselves with the Liberty League "Jeffersonians" against the New Deal. Indicative of the murky depths of the Hall was the letter sent by Cohalan in reference to Governor Lehman, openly raising anti-Semitic arguments. A baneful influence in the city's educational system, the Hall is also inextricably bound up with some of the city's most discredited labor leaders. It is not at all accidental that the name of at least one powerful Tammany district leader has been brought into the current trial of labor racketeers.

Labor's problem in the complex municipal situation is not an easy one. Clarity can be brought into the matter by a broadened American Labor Party that will be a genuine alliance of the workers and middle class of New York, an inclusive federation composed of the trade unions, fraternal organizations, Negro groups, the Socialists, the Communists, the All People's Party of Harlem, etc. Such a movement, based on a broad program defending the needs of the workers, middle-class taxpayers, civil service, and Negro people, would, in essence, be a city-wide people's-front movement. To such a development, New York progressives may well bend their energies.

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The Supreme Court Issue

Support for the President's plan is essential not only to permit enactment of social legislation now, but as the first step toward curbing the Court

An Editorial

THROUGH the avalanche of words which a reactionary press has toppled over on President Roosevelt's plan concerning the federal courts, two unassailable facts remain visible.

The first of these truths is the simple proposition that the present Court, contrary to the expressed will of the people, stands in the way of even moderate reforms, and, inferentially, in the way of any profounder changes that a more progressive Congress may advance while the incumbent judges constitute the High Bench. Hence, if these legislative changes are to be made, and the American people aided and relieved to that extent, the composition of the Court must be altered. None of those justices who are so obviously out of tune with the needs of the day appears on the verge of resigning. On the contrary, they have been stubbornly clinging to their jobs with an almost savage desire to thwart progressive legislation. And surely it will not be contended that the thing to do is to wait for a few of them to die. The fate of millions cannot be made to depend either on the whim or the health of six unyielding men.

The second of these truths is that a defeat for the Roosevelt proposal will in effect be an endorsement of the most reactionary interpretation of the American constitution. It will mean the acceptance, at least for a time, of the powerlessness of Congress to legislate for the general welfare of the American people. It will be a surrender to that stultifying concept of government which makes the agreement of forty-eight legislatures necessary to attain ends desired by the great majority of people throughout the country. It will act as a powerful restorative to those forces of Reaction that were so eloquently repudiated at the polls last November. To those forces it matters little who makes the country's laws, so long as their men are in a position to throw those laws in the wastebasket.

Now, against the proposal powerful forces have been arrayed. It is significant that far and away the greatest opposition comes from precisely those quarters that railed against Roosevelt and the New Deal throughout the campaign, i. e., a political opposition. But those who oppose the plan do not dare to admit that fact; they had a political encounter with Roosevelt three months ago, and they are still picking up the pieces.

Opponents of the measure argue either that it is unconstitutional; or that, while legal, it is somehow tricky and dishonest, that it would undermine our "independent judiciary," for generations held in reverence; or that it would destroy the constitutional system of checks and balances by subordinating the Court to Congress, which, presumably, would be subservient in turn to the executive.

Not one of these contentions holds water, either in the light of history or in present reality.

The question of constitutionality is raised only by the most dishonest critics of the plan, and then only in dealing with a most unenlightened audience. For the constitution on this point is crystal clear:

> . . . he [the President] shall nominate and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate shall appoint ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, judges of the Supreme Court, and all other officers of the United States whose appointments are not *herein otherwise provided for. . . .* (Article II, Section 2.)
>
> The judicial power of the United States shall be vested in one Supreme Court, and in such inferior courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The judges both of the Supreme and inferior courts, shall hold their offices during good behavior, and shall at stated times receive for their services a compensation which shall not be diminished during their continuance in office. (Article III, Section 1.)

Not a single word concerning the number of judges to compose the Supreme Court. Clearly the President cannot force a judge to retire, but Congress obviously may expand or reduce the Court to any size it sees fit. *And it has done exactly that, not once, but six times.* Originally the Court, by act of Congress, had six members. In 1801 it was reduced to five. In 1807 began a series of increases, first to seven; then to nine in 1837, and to ten in 1863. Three years later it was reduced to eight, and was jacked up to its present number in 1869. Assuredly, there is nothing in American historical tradition that makes sacred a Supreme Court membership of nine.

We come now to the emotional reaction against the Roosevelt plan: the charge that it would drag into the mire of politics an institution that has always been reverenced as a thing apart, the very fountain-head of purest justice, *sans peur et sans reproche.* This semi-religious concept of the Court is a comparatively late development in American history, and one fostered with an enthusiasm that has increased in proportion to the growing use of the Court as a weapon of corporate wealth. There was a time when the Supreme Court was held somewhat less in awe. Every schoolboy knows how Andrew Jackson, championing that same doctrine of states' rights which has now become the shibboleth of Reaction, publicly ridiculed the Court and its chief justice. "John Marshall has made his decision," said Jackson, "now let him enforce it!"

Jackson's attitude was far from being unusual or conspicuous in the American tradition. In his first inaugural address, in 1861, Lincoln warned the country: "If the policy of the government upon vital questions affecting the whole people is to be irrevocably fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court . . . the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having to that extent practically resigned their government into the hands of that eminent tribunal." And the New York *Tribune,* ancestor of the journal which now pretends that the Roosevelt proposal will bring the walls of Jericho tumbling down, showed a minus quantity of reverence for the Court at the time of the Dred Scott verdict. The *Tribune* found the decision entitled to "just so much moral weight as would be the judgment of a majority of those congregated in any Washington barroom. . . . Until that remote period when different judges sitting in this same Court shall reverse this wicked and false judgment, the Constitution of the United States is nothing better than the bulwark of inhumanity and oppression."

Regardless of what it is in theory, the political nature of the Court in fact was clearly indicated in the post-Civil War days. With the purpose of preventing President Johnson from filling vacancies, the number of judges in the Court was reduced from ten to eight. On the accession of Grant to the presidency, the number was increased to nine, a circumstance which, coupled with the resignation of one of the judges, gave Grant two appointments. A decision against the administration handed down by the Court in 1870 was reversed in 1871, shortly after the Grant appointments, when both of the new judges voted with the former minority.

Theodore Roosevelt made no bones about political influence on the Court. "This decision," he wrote in his autobiography, "I caused to be annulled by the Court that had rendered it; and the present power of the national government to deal effectively with the trusts is due solely to the success of the administration in securing this reversal of its former decision by the Supreme Court." But perhaps most striking of all was the resolution addressed to the United States Senate by the legislature of Maine following the Dred Scott decision. "Resolved," it read, "that the Supreme Court of the United States should, by peaceful

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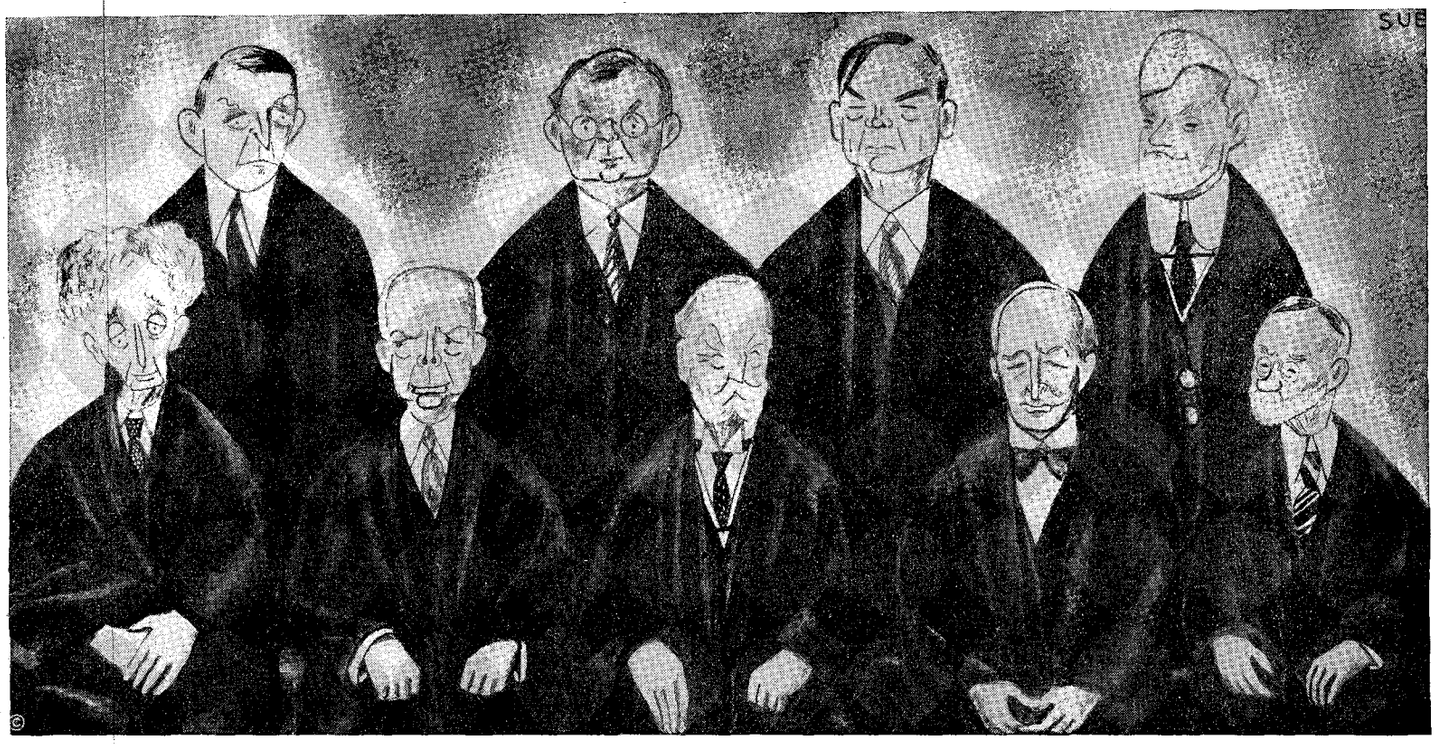

Aline Fruhauf (American Artists' Congess)

and constitutional measures be so reconstituted as to relieve it from the domination of a sectional faction." In 1937, the legislature of Maine likewise addressed the United States Senate. But this time it is in hysterical protest against "reconstituting" the Court, that holy of holies upon which Roosevelt would lay his profane political hands.

The argument that the Roosevelt proposal would subordinate the Court to the executive and thus encourage a trend toward an authoritarian state is among the most specious advanced against the plan. To be sure, if the plan is approved by Congress, Roosevelt will not, in all likelihood, be hamstrung on his legislative program, although it is well to remember here that the N.R.A. and several other measures were thrown out by unanimous verdicts of the Court, not by five-to-four decisions. But even assuming that his appointees will uphold the major part of his program, the laws of the United States will still be passed by a Congress, and that Congress will be answerable to the people, as will the President himself. But, say these opponents of the plan, you are establishing a precedent, and a more fascist-minded executive than Roosevelt may well take advantage of that precedent to juggle the Court's number for his own dictatorial purposes. That is either an extremely naïve view or one intended purely for hysterical propaganda. Fascists do not wait on precedent, and they are hardly concerned about the niceties of democratic procedure. Mussolini didn't pack the Italian parliament; he sent it packing.

It is striking, moreover, that those who are so concerned about having the Court's power "subordinated" are in no way worried about "subordinating" the will of the people to the reactionary social views of five political appointees. The sincerity of such "democrats" is palpably open to question.

But there is still another type of opposition, and this variety, while willingly made use of by reactionaries, comes often enough from sincerely liberal persons. This is the contention that the move does not get at the root of the matter, that it does not touch upon the usurped power of the Court to invalidate acts of Congress. Proponents of this argument want a constitutional amendment to strip the Court of its nullifying power, and some of them believe that the President's move will retard pressure for this more fundamental change. Here there seems to be a strange premise that the Roosevelt proposal and a constitutional amendment are mutually exclusive, that we must choose one or the other. There is little to support this view. To reject the Roosevelt reform out of hand because an amendment is more desirable is to adopt the policy of all-or-nothing. In practice, it would mean the complete crippling of social legislation, perhaps for years to come. After thirteen years, the child-labor amendment is still dragging from one legislature to another. The disgraceful tactics employed against that comparatively mild measure will be a thousand times magnified when the reactionaries are face to face with an amendment to strip the Supreme Court of its power to destroy progressive legislation.

A more sensible attitude is to support the Roosevelt proposals as the most important immediate step in the struggle to curb the Court. The country is today dividing for or against this concrete measure. It has the enormous strength and prestige of the administration behind it. The opposition to it cuts across party lines and represents, in many respects, a greater concentration of Reaction than the forces which backed Landon.

A victory for the Roosevelt proposals will open the way to more fundamental and far-reaching reform of the Court. The myth that the Supreme Court is sacred, that any change in the present system signifies the end of the republic, would suffer irreparable damage. Yet precisely this refrain is the keynote of the whole opposition. The only guarantee of more drastic reform of the Court is continued vigilance and militant action by the masses of people. Nobody can guarantee what Roosevelt will support after a victory for his proposal. But past experience has shown that defeats lead to further retreats by the administration. A defeat on this issue now would embolden Reaction and weaken progressives.

As matters stand, the administration needs all the progressive support it can muster for the President's plan. This support must be forthcoming. All-or-nothing attitudes, when the opposition is so powerfully organized, lead to nothing. If we view the whole question of the Court's reform as a developing process in which one victory will give us the conditions for further victories, then the Roosevelt proposals are seen in their true perspective. It is necessary to win this first trial of strength on the Court's reform if we are to go on to win others.

Let your federal legislators know where you stand. There is no time to waste. Pressure where it will do most good in support of the administration bill is an immediate necessity. It is only that popular pressure which will see the issue through.

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STORM OVER THE NEST

Maurice Becker

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Covering the News

Covering the events of the week ending March 1

GUNNING against the Roosevelt proposal continued heavy during the week, but from proponents of the plan came signs that a major offensive was imminent. A large question mark was stamped on the landslide of letters attacking the plan, when supporters of the measure began examining the nature of these communications. Similarities of wording in letters from widely scattered points, plus the fact that a great many congressmen received approximately the same number of missives, pointed to a synthetic pressure machine operated by reactionary political organizations. This belief gained strength from the revelation that many congressmen had received, with scores of letters, printed slips reading "Hands off the Court." Dissemination of these slips was attributed to a Rev. Gerald B. Winrod, of Kansas. Known as the "Jayhawk Nazi," Winrod was exposed last year as one of Julius Streicher's anti-Semitic agents in the United States.

One of Winrod's form letters was produced on the floor of Congress by Senator Robinson (D., Ark.). "Dear Christian friend," it began, "You have been reading about Mr. Roosevelt's shocking demand that he be allowed to pack the Supreme Court with radicals." Making what Robinson termed "the old appeal of the Ku-Klux Klan," the letter, which accompanied six other forms to be sent to congressmen, declared the Court plan was supported by "both Moscow and Rome," and concluded, "Yours in Christ, Gerald B. Winrod."

While the plan still appeared to have a majority in the Senate, the President himself was scheduled to swing into public action within the next two weeks. Rumors were afloat in Washington that he contemplated a tour of the country, similar to that which Wilson made in defense of the League of Nations. Whatever the truth of that story, it was no rumor that he would go before the country in two radio speeches, scheduled for March 4 and 9. In the "fireside chat" of the ninth, the President is expected to amplify remarks made to Arthur Krock of the New York *Times*, whose dispatch included the quotation: "When I retire to private life on January 20, 1941, I do not want to leave the country in the condition Buchanan left it to Lincoln."

IN its first decision since the controversy began, the Court avoided dynamite, contenting itself with a corollary to the decision handed down last year permitting Congress to alter the gold content of the dollar. The new decision, voiding contracts which call for payment in terms of the old dollar, was opposed by the diehard bloc of Van Devanter, McReynolds, Sutherland, and Butler.

Two concrete developments of the week were calculated to work against the President's proposal. One was passage by the Senate of the Sumners-McCarran bill, permitting Supreme Court justices to retire at seventy on full pay. It was hoped by some opponents of the Roosevelt plan that two or three justices would shortly step down from the Bench as a result, and thus obviate the need for more drastic action, but administration forces saw no likelihood of such a development, and logically looked upon the move as a calculated attempt to knife the President's proposal. The second obstruction was hardly taken with any seriousness, despite the source. This was Senator Borah's reactionary proposal for a constitutional amendment that would deny the Court the right to interfere with state laws of an economic or social naure—an issue which is not at stake at all—but leave it full power to nullify any act of Congress.

WITH both branches marking time on the Court issue, congressmen resigned themselves to the prospect of a long stretch in Washington. "This question," said Speaker Bankhead, referring to the Court proposal, "the farm-tenant problem, the drought issue, governmental reorganization, a new presidential message on labor relations, and other matters indicate that it will be a long session." Among the "other matters," three figured prominently in the week's congressional news: neutrality, housing, and anti-lynching legislation.

From the House Foreign Affairs Committee emerged the McReynolds neutrality resolution, even more objectionable than its Senate counterpart, the Pittman bill. (See page 20.) Not only do its embargo provisions, like those of the Pittman bill, apply against all belligerents, without distinction between an aggressor and a country or government acting in self-defense, but they include an even more vicious principle, namely, a ban on the solicitation of contributions in this country for the use of belligerents or of factions in a civil war. This thrust at such aid as Americans are rendering to the Spanish loyalists in the form of food and medical supplies was roundly denounced by the progressive bloc in Congress. "There is no sense in our framing legislation in such a way," declared Representative Coffee (D., Wash.), "as to penalize friendly democratic governments in danger from fascist groups." And Representative Bernard (F.-L., Minn.), who alone denounced the present neutrality law against Spain, was even stronger in his denunciation. "We committed a colossal blunder when we put a munitions embargo on the Spanish government," said Bernard. "Are we going to commit more blunders now and just keep on committing them?"

Lester Polakov

Homer Martin—Challenged labor's foe

Two other bills of major significance were dropped into the Senate hopper, in both of which Senator Wagner of New York had a hand. One was the Wagner-Steagall housing bill, providing for a four-year housing program, to be financed by a bond issue of $1,000,000,000, plus a $50,000,000 appropriation for outright grants. The measure is not substantially different from the housing bill that failed to pass the House last year, and is not nearly as comprehensive as the Scott bill, which provides far more generously for outright grants. "Adequate housing for families of low income," Scott believes, "is possible only on the basis of outright government grant of funds needed for land and construction." The other contribution of the New York Senator was the Wagner-Van Nuys anti-lynching bill, carrying a fine of from $2000 to $10,000 against any political subdivision "which fails to protect and give fair trial to those suspected or accused of crime." "Never before," said the two senators, inviting strong support for the bill, "have the prospects for the passage of a federal anti-lynching bill been so bright."

CHALKING up no fewer than ten victories in Detroit alone, labor during the week again proved the effectiveness of the sit-down strike as a means of crippling scab activity and winning demands from employers. In one of these, the strike against the Young Spring & Wire Co., an annual wage increase of $500,000 was gained for 3100 employes. Three thousand women cigar workers were out in six tobacco plants, preparing to present their demands and voting upon the suggestion of auto union leaders to join the A. F. of L. Cigar Makers' Union. In Los Angeles, the Douglas Aircraft Corp. reopened its plant following the ejection of sit-down strikers. Here, too, the United Automobile Workers spurred union activity by furnishing bail for 118 arrested strikers. Commenting on the reopening of the plant, Andrew Schmolder, C.I.O. organizer, said: "The strike is not yet ended;

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we are going to have a picket line . . . which is going to be big and heavy. We have also organized our various committees and a women's auxiliary to aid our pickets."

Henry Ford fulminated in Detroit against strikes, strikers, and unions, and Secretary of Commerce Roper, "not speaking as an officer of the administration," declared: "Any sit-down strike that undertakes to take over personal property . . . will not be long endured by the courts." These, and a number of other commentaries ranging from the avowedly reactionary to the ignorant, not only failed to stop sit-downs, but did not halt in any way the activities of their most successful proponent, the C.I.O. Speaking in Newark, N. J., shortly after Governor Hoffman's threat of "bloodshed," Homer Martin, auto union leader, asked: "Where was Governor Hoffman when industry was on a sit-down strike against labor? Where was he when the United States Supreme Court was on a sit-down strike against the rights of workers? Where was he and his militia when the steel barons were conspiring against the workers? . . . There is the probability that things are going to change in this country, and that will be just too bad for Governor Hoffman."

The same Governor Hoffman crashed the front pages again when he announced that he was going to "investigate" the slaying of R. Norman Redwood, "sandhog" union leader. Unionists predicted another Hauptmann merry-go-round if the Liberty League governor insisted on turning whitewash sleuth again. In New York, Prosecutor John J. Breslin charged Sam Rosoff, wealthy building contractor, and Joseph S. Fay, union racketeer, with responsibility for the murder (see page 20). William Green, A. F. of L. chief, remained silent on the Redwood killing, and resisted all attempts to get him to investigate general racketeering in unions, though three successive federation conventions (1933, '34, '35) had urged such a probe.

OUTSTANDING violence of the week was credited to the Fansteel Metallurgical Corp. in Waukegan, Ill. After refusing to negotiate with striking workers, the employers rounded up sixty sheriff's deputies and had them drive 100 sit-down strikers from the plant with a brutal barrage of tear-gas and knockout-gas bombs.

A highly significant and historical conference took place when Philip Murray, chairman of the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee, met with Benjamin F. Fairless, president of the Carnegie-Illinois Corp., America's largest steel producer, in the first of a projected series of talks. At the same time, the forty-hour week was granted by a number of steel companies, while others announced wage increases totalling $100,000,000 yearly in an effort to forestall widespread S.W.O.C. activities. Railroad men pressed ahead on their demands for a 20 percent wage raise on a national scale, and negotiations were expected to begin soon. And a notable advance was made in the newspaper field, when the New York *World-Telegram* announced its readiness "to negotiate a contract with its editorial employes in which the New York [Newspaper] Guild is given full recognition as their accepted bargaining agent."

Herr Schacht—Nazi trade schemer

"TO defend Madrid is to defend Paris, London, Prague, the northern countries, and every free and democratic nation in the not distant future," declared Spain's Foreign Minister Julio Alvarez del Vayo, following a tour of the Madrid loyalist front, still intact after months of fierce battle. While the week's developments were not spectacular, preparatory advance for what some observers predicted would be the long-awaited loyalist general offensive were noted. Developments making possible such an offensive included the delegation of undivided authority over the 325-mile central front to General José Miaja; the continued advance of Asturian forces in Oviedo; a stalemate along the Jarama River front south of Madrid; short loyalist advances in University City, and loyalist pressure on Toledo and Talavera de la Reina from the east.

Loyalist forces were reported strongly entrenched on the outskirts of Oviedo, after capturing the bull ring, arms factory, and insane asylum. The Jarama River front was relatively quiet, with the government forces exerting pressure at various points, though making no appreciable gains. It was believed that the loyalists were preparing to launch a large-scale offensive against the rebel line around Madrid to coincide with the establishment of the international naval blockade around Spain and Portugal. Although the U.S.S.R. and Portugal decided not to participate in the blockade (the U.S.S.R. because it was not accorded equality on the Mediterranean side), loyalist strategy seemed to be based on the belief that a successful offensive, launched before the rebels find ways to circumvent the blockade, might be decisive.

Mussolini had his hands full during the week with an Ethiopian revolt, of an extent still unknown, and revealed to the world through a spectacular bombing in Addis Ababa. General Rodolfo Graziani was seriously wounded, though Italian reports tried to minimize the seriousness of his condition as well as the extent of the revolt. In retaliation for the attack on Graziani, Italian troops were said to have killed Ras Desta Demtu, Haile Selassie's son-in-law, arrested at least 3000 natives and executed several hundred, although exact figures on the mass executions were not forthcoming from Rome.

Nazi leaders, watching the rearmament groundswell throughout Europe, thought they saw a chance to combine business with arming at the expense of Germany's competitors. Economics Minister Hjalmar Schacht was credited with a plan to transfer part of Germany's foreign exchange now used for its own armament, to the purchase of foreign raw materials for the manufacture of export goods. Germany, according to this plan, would take advantage of the slowness with which continental factories, busy with arms orders, are filling export trade. Hitler made a gesture towards Switzerland, guaranteeing that buffer country's "neutrality"—a gesture which observers discounted heavily, remembering Kaiser Wilhelm's guarantee of Belgium's neutrality prior to the World War.

Chief sufferer at the hands of the new Nazi trade strategy would be Great Britain, whose home secretary, Sir John Simon, announced that British plants were turning out 100,000 gas masks daily. Another distasteful development in the London week was the result of the election in India, in which the anti-imperialist Indian National Congress Party romped off with at least 715 out of 1585 seats in the Indian lower house.

AFTER a nine-hour debate on his government's financial policy, Premier Léon Blum received a substantial vote of confidence, 362 to 211, in the French Chamber of Deputies. Leading the attack against the Blum policies were former Finance Minister Paul Reynaud and former Premier Pierre-Etienne Flandin. The latter described the "desires of the masses" as "sordid materialism," a phrase which the Right may live to rue.

Half-way round the world, a very different regime, that of Hayashi in Japan, also weathered some stormy parliamentary sessions. Naval Minister Mitsumasa Yonai made a thinly-veiled reference to the Soviet naval base at Vladivostok when he told the Diet that Japan planned to destroy the naval bases of its "enemies" in the next war before enemy planes could reach the Japanese mainland. Notice that Japanese imperialism was far from finished in its career of conquest, was given by Foreign Office spokesman Eiji Amau, who classified Japan as still among the "have-nots." Added point to this characterization was made by the revised budget introduced by the Hayashi cabinet. More than half of the budget allowance is hogged by the armed forces, with the army getting the biggest share. Running to a total of 2,815,000,000 yen, the new budget is only 223,000,000 yen less than the budget which helped overthrow the Hirota cabinet.

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Mobilizing America for War

What the War Department is planning for you civilians smacks unpleasantly of true fascism

By H. C. Engelbrecht

ALL eyes on the War Department and on the Sheppard-Hill bill! The notorious Industrial Mobilization Plan, unearthed by the Nye munitions inquiry last year, has reached a stage where there is grave risk that it will be embodied in our laws. Through clever maneuvering, it is to be tacked on to pending neutrality legislation to assure its passage. A five-cent pamphlet on the subject, *A Blue-Print for Fascism*, by Frank B. Blumenfield, just published by the American League Against War and Fascism, clearly shows that the plan embodied in the Sheppard-Hill bill is a thinly disguised "blue-print for fascism."

An earlier edition of this war plan, produced in 1933, contained some interesting features which have been omitted in the revised edition of 1936. Most important of these were a Public Relations Administration and a Selective Service Administration. In plain language, these provided for a press gag and for a labor draft. But there is no reason to think that publicity and labor control have been omitted from the revised mobilization plan of the War Department. It is simply a matter of avoiding antagonism for the time being. Aside from that, there is presented a complete plan for running the next war under the dictatorship of the military and the great industrialists.

The public-relations section is a perfect marvel of cold-blooded impudence. Hardly have the people realized (through the writings of Lasswell, Ponsonby, Creel, and others) what the official lie factories of the last war did to make the war palatable, how they spread atrocity stories, faked pictures, fanned hatred, suppressed important news, and bullied them with four-minute men—hardly have these things become clear, when the War Department tells them that in the next war this propaganda business is going to be even bigger and better. Not a single avenue of public information is left uncovered. There is to be a division for domestic and foreign news, another will take care of films, posters, cartoons, photographs, and scenarios, still another will provide for speakers, women's organizations, and war expositions, and finally, there is a section for radio, newspapers, magazines, billboards, and bulletins.

A publicity director for the utilities once described his job as "learning them there dumb-bells how to do the *vox populi* . . . and do the dear public fall for it!" The militarists evidently have the same low opinion of the public. But where, one is tempted to ask, have our press lords been since this plan for gagging and censoring the press was revealed? They tore the heavens with their clamor about the freedom of the press when they tried to prevent the unionization of their reporters, when they persisted in using child labor, when they were ordered to erect fire-escapes. But now, when this mobilization plan reveals a real threat to the freedom of the press, not a sound has come from them. No expensive lawyers are hurried off to Washington to protest, no injunctions are asked, no violation of the constitution is alleged. Is it possible that freedom of the press does not really interest them?

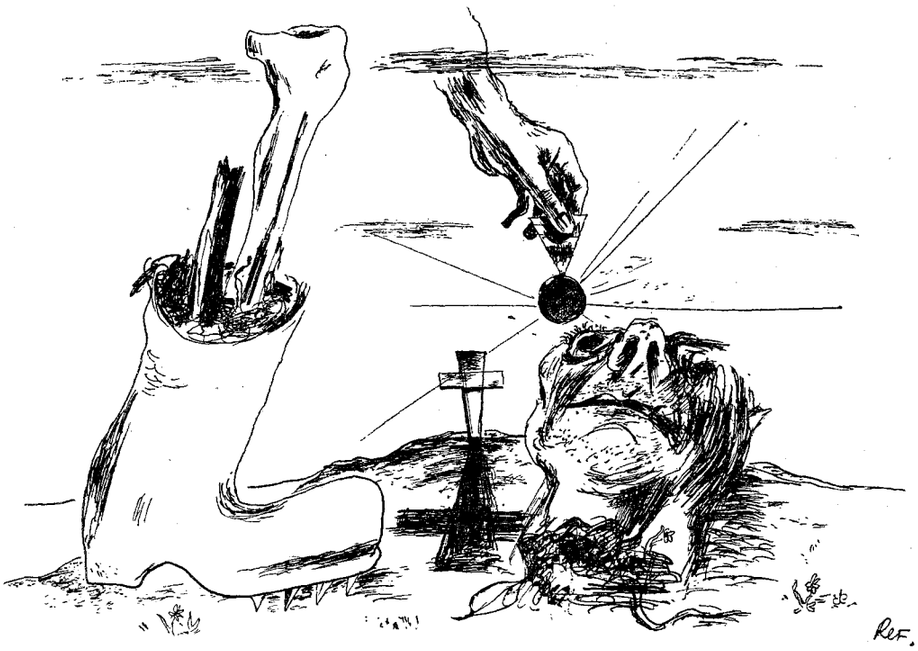
The other highly important features of the plan concern industry and labor. And thereby hangs a most significant tale. During the World War, there developed a situation the recurrence of which the War Department and its allies among the great industrialists are trying to prevent. Millions of able-bodied workers were drafted out of their factories and offices into combat service. Enormous demands were being made on industry for the production of all kinds of war materials. Immigration had come to a standstill. The result was an acute shortage of labor.

This was an ideal situation for the workingman. He was everywhere in demand, and he was able to bargain successfully for higher wages. The competition for workers was so keen that one factory would steal or entice away men from another factory to itself with the promise of more money. In the shipyards, men earned $15, $18, and more daily. To this day it is remembered that these workers wore silk shirts and came to work in swanky cars. Industry had fat government contracts on a cost-plus basis, which meant the higher its charges, the greater its percentage. So it did not worry about high wages; the government paid for it all.

That does not mean that real wages went up during the war. On the contrary, prices, as usual, led the parade, and most wages never caught up. In seven years the price of food went up 105 percent. Very few wages reached that peak.

Now it happened rather frequently that workers who were lured from one job to another found that as soon as a certain contract was completed, their wages would be cut sharply. This caused much discontent and many strikes. The entire labor situation, then, was characterized by a rapid turn-over and by serious and endless strikes.

The government was worried, and it decided to bring some order into this chaos. Various labor boards and conciliation committees were established which succeeded in stabilizing the situation. Most of these boards were under the control, at least in part, of the great industrialists and of the war cabinet. Various rules were worked out prescribing what labor might do and what it might not do; there was wage fixing of various kinds,



Auton Refregier

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and in that way a measure of labor peace was established.

In a report made in the war years, the secretary of labor made the following revealing statement:

> With the exception of the sacrifices of the men in the armed service, the greatest sacrifices have come from those at the lower rung of the industrial ladder. Wage increases respond last to the needs of this class of labor, and their meager returns are hardly adequate, in view of the increased cost of living to maintain even their meager standard of life. It is upon them the war pressure has borne most severely. . . .
>
> Too often there is a glaring inconsistency between our democratic purposes in this war abroad and the autocratic conduct of those guiding industry at home.

But those planning for the next war remember only the silk shirts of the workers and the numerous strikes. Therefore the next war will see none of that nonsense. There is to be a universal draft of all over eighteen years old. Millions of these will be soldiers in the army, other millions will be soldiers in factories. That seems to be the intention of the secretary of war, who has declared that "the War Department will prepare a labor draft." The millions who will receive a "deferred rating" in the draft will be assigned to industry. There they will take orders, or else starve or fight. This is the completion of the plan placed before the War Policies Commission in 1931 by Colonel Robbins, who advocated a general civilian registration alongside of the military draft. Its purpose was: "So that we know where a man is and what he is doing; so that we can put him to work."

The various labor boards and mediation committees are also to be revived. Again they will be largely in the hands of the great industrialists. Next time there will be less patience with labor than in the World War.

And what is going to be done about the great industrialists, the war contractors, the munitions makers? Will they, too, be drafted together with their factories and their capital? Silly question! Why, that would clearly be unconstitutional. The Supreme Court has approved of the conscription of man-power, but when you get to property and wealth, there's "due process" and "no confiscation" and a dozen other provisions which stand like a mighty fortress protecting economic privilege.

There is not a little irony in the fact that this entire mobilization plan arose out of the agitation carried on by the American Legion and others to "take the profits out of war." The Legion forced the appointment of the War Policies Commission in 1930, which was instructed to inquire into "methods of equalizing the burdens and to remove the profits of war, together with a study of policies to be pursued in event of war." The commission was specifically forbidden to consider the "conscription of labor."

This commission heard chiefly military men and big business men. Some labor leaders and peace workers also had a hearing. But when the commission reported, it declared that the idea of "drafting capital" was "impractical and impossible." But the drafting of men for military service and for the war industries is apparently not. True, the War Policies Commission said nothing about labor, and it heard strong opposition to the idea of a labor draft. The War Department, however, picked up where this earlier commission left off. Not only is it going to conscript labor, but it is going to wipe out all labor legislation that may stand in its way. The manner in which it scorns the hard-won protection of women in industry is significant:

> For economic reasons, the statutes of the various states prescribe certain restrictions in the hours and conditions of employment of women in industry. . . . Many of these regulations and restrictions are expedient rather than necessary to the well-being of either the nation or the workers. In a national emergency much of this expediency is lost and the operation of some of these regulations and restrictions should be suspended.

What, then, can you expect in the next war if this mobilization plan is approved? Millions of young men will be drafted and sent overseas; other millions will be conscripted as workers and assigned to the war industries; gradually women and minors will also appear in the factories; freedom of press, freedom of speech, and civil liberties generally will be suspended. The country will be ruled by a military dictatorship which will enforce economic tyranny. Meanwhile, the financial and industrial arrangements will be in the hands of "prominent industrialists." Nothing is contemplated that will prevent the outrageous profiteering of the last war—and of every war. When a War Department representative before the Nye Committee was asked his opinion about conscripting industry and the industrialists together with the soldier and the worker, he was so stunned that he asked for further time to think it over.

Needless to say, what the War Department is planning is a serious threat to freedom and democracy. It is true that imperialist wars breed dictatorship. All the more reason, then, for fighting war vigorously and relentlessly. The Nye Committee was right in issuing the following warning:

> In view of the growth of dictatorships in the world using labor under military control, it is very important that the people weigh the grave dangers to our democracy involved in the draft of man-power and labor under the conditions proposed. The price of a war may be actual operating dictatorship.

Joseph Serrano

"And then again, we could join the Communists—if they weren't such misfits."

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Whose Sun Is Rising in Japan?

A study of the internal political scene reveals contradictions as yet unresolved

By Albert Brown

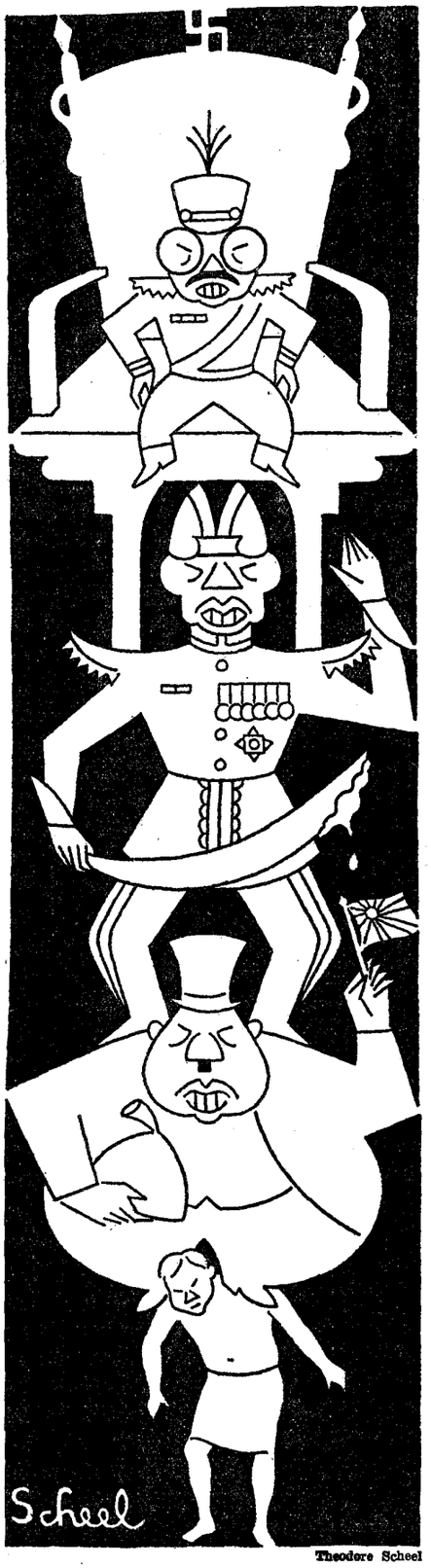
JAPANESE politics, however obscure and enigmatic to those nurtured in western democracies, has no less of an internal logic and intelligible development. The overthrow of the Hirota cabinet, the dramatic thwarting of General Ukagi's attempts at cabinet formation, and the current installation of General Hayashi as head of the government are stages in a single process. The present parliamentary crisis, marked by embarrassing interpellations in the Diet on army policies and budgetary expansion, is but part of that larger crisis which continues and deepens as Japan approaches her "great war."

The swing from Hirota to Hayashi represents a bloodless version of that other crisis of little more than a year ago when, on February 26, 1936, the extremist army clique staged a premature but not unpremeditated "rebellion." Three venerable "moderate" political leaders were assassinated, one was gravely wounded, and some others but narrowly escaped with their skins whole. The then prime minister, Okada, was forced to resign, together with the surviving remnants of his cabinet, after a sensational escape from the assassins. This Okada cabinet would have been characterized as reactionary by ordinary western standards. In Japan, however, it was considered "moderate," partly because it put up resistance to the mounting expenditures and the reckless adventures of the army. The principal opponent of the army demands was the aged, but extremely able, minister of finance, Takahashi, who paid for his opposition with his life.

THE HIROTA CABINET was formed immediately after the February 26 "revolt." It was installed under conditions of martial law after much haggling and bargaining. The army assumed the upper hand in the cabinet; Hirota's minister of war was General Terauchi, a belligerent saber-rattler. The army clique did not, however, get complete control.

The present Diet, whose dissolution the army demanded, to a large extent symbolizes popular opposition to the army program. It was elected on February 20 of last year in a striking victory of the anti-military and anti-fascist groups and parties. The proletarian representation alone rose from four to twenty-four. The reactionary Seyukai Party, which at the time was friendly to the military, lost its majority in the Diet. It is significant that the young officers staged their "rebellion" six days after the election.

In this January's sessions of the Diet a definite anti-army spirit prevailed. The scathing criticism of the army by the more moderate leader of this same Seyukai Party, strangely enough, was the pretext used by the army to demand the dissolution of the Diet. Mr. Hamada, the spokesman of Seyukai Party, accused the army leaders of dominating the cabinet and planning to install fascism. This would be an ordinary and routine criticism by an opposition party in any ordinary parliament, but in Japan this criticism precipitated a major political crisis. The army demanded the dissolution of the Diet. The emperor met them halfway, and adjourned the Diet. The army then demanded the resignation of the Hirota cabinet. The emperor agreed and commissioned the "moderate" General Ugaki (a choice some degrees to the right of Hirota) to form a new cabinet. The army rejected the emperor's choice. Japan was stunned; the will of its "sacred" and "omnipotent" ruler was defied. Such open defiance of the emperor by the army recalled the February 26 episode. Once again, the deep fissures in the much-lauded state structure of Japan stood out sharply.



Theodore Scheel

To solve this dangerous stalemate, General Hayashi, representing a further concession to the army, was selected as prime minister. The army reluctantly agreed, and the new cabinet was pieced together. This cabinet, despite its "moderate" face, is under army domination to a greater degree than was the Hirota cabinet. For example, it does not have a single official representative of the political parties, whereas the Hirota cabinet had four. The Hayashi cabinet, however, cannot be characterized as an army cabinet, for the "moderate" groups around the emperor still hold the most important posts. The crisis among the ruling classes has not been solved. The new cabinet is at best a temporary stop-gap; its life will be short and stormy and dangerous.

The political parties in the Diet were silent during the entire battle over the cabinet. It seemed as if they were stunned speechless by the avalanche unloosed after a single speech of criticism. Even the legal and recognized social democratic party (Shakai Taishuto) failed to record its position despite its twenty-odd members of parliament. The battle for control of the government was confined to the army and its supporters against the "moderates," grouped around the emperor. The bourgeois political parties, never the sole expression of the ruling classes, are now playing a significantly lesser role in the internal conflicts of the ruling groups in Japan. More and more they are becoming the spokesmen of the middle classes and the small independent capitalists. The decisive sections of the ruling class are gravitating around the real sources of power, the army on

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the one hand and the court circles on the other. The only true friends and supporters of parliamentarianism and democratic rights are the common people of Japan.

The position of the emperor as a "divine and impartial ruler" is an essential part of the state structure of Japan. When this emperor becomes a partisan in the inner conflicts of the ruling classes and when the army openly defies him, his legendary position of ruler is endangered. This can only happen when the differences among the ruling classes are grave and decisive. These differences exist, although their exact nature is not always easy to define. The differences center on the all-important issue of war and war preparations. The Japanese ruling classes are quite unanimous on the necessity of expansion on the Asiatic mainland through war.

War against the Soviet Union is generally agreed upon. *But when and with what allies this war will begin cannot be solved easily.* Witness the opposition to the German-Japanese anti-Soviet alliance, and the modest but repeated demands for a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union. Seizure of China is also agreed upon, but the tempo, the method, and the direction of this seizure unsettles cabinets, investors refuse to put funds into Manchukuo, and inner conflicts are aggravated. The most pressing differences rage around the vast financing problems of the military forces. Fifty percent of the budget is already spent upon the armed forces and this expenditure increases yearly. The economic structure is no longer able to absorb the mounting budget deficits without serious danger of bankruptcy to the entire financial system. The larger sections of finance capital and industrial groups are opponents of the extremist army program, among them, the powerful house of Mitsubishi. The differences which arise from the war program extend to domestic policies as well. The army fascist dictatorship is opposed by the masses because it means war, deepening economic misery, and cruel enslavement. The moderate bourgeois groups oppose the army dictatorship and program because it endangers their financial structure and tends to place them at the mercy of their rivals, grouped around the army. It is no contradiction in the "moderates'" creed to oppose military rule and at the same time support the military-sponsored "dangerous thought" laws, restriction of democratic rights, and maintenance of the disgracefully low standards of living of the masses.

Japan is an imperialist nation with a highly developed finance capital dominating its economic life. But Japan is still predominantly an agrarian country which has not overcome its feudal relations in agriculture and powerful feudal forms, traditions, and influences in the state structure. The feudal bureaucracy of the old state apparatus has been largely preserved. This bureaucracy, composed largely of landlords, has crystallized into a permanent caste with special powers which are increased by virtue of the close ties of the bureaucracy with industry, government economic monopolies and colonial enterprises. The wealthier landlords, despite their independent interests, have been investing their incomes in industry and banks. Thus, despite the powerful role of the landlords, the bureaucracy, and the feudal forces, the recurring struggles among the ruling classes do not take the simple form of the landlord and feudal elements on the one side and capitalist forces on the other. It is far more complicated and diverse than one is tempted to believe. The so-called "moderate" groupings are centered around the emperor, while the extreme groupings choose the leadership of the army. There are landlords and capitalists in both camps.

In the political structure of Japan, the emperor, the vast bureaucracy, and the army exercise the state power. Theoretically, all subjects and all organs of the state are subservient to the will and veto of the emperor. In practice, the army modifies this theory at times. The Diet has no power other than to pass on the budget and the bills presented by the cabinet. Its refusal to pass a budget results in the previous year's budget going into effect automatically. All bills passed by the Diet must have the emperor's approval; he also has the power of veto. The emperor may and does rule by decrees which then become law.

Constitutionally, the emperor is the sole source of power. The imperial family is a powerful institution with a large bureaucratic apparatus of its own, controlling the greatest single accumulation of wealth with a vast independent income. The imperial family is a great landlord owning vast tracts of agricultural, mineral, and forest lands. It is also heavily interested in industry, shipping, and colonies. The value of its wealth and income compares only with Mitsui and the Mitsubishi combined, which head the list of the five wealthiest civil families of Japan. The Mitsubishi family, incidentally, is an old favorite and ally of the imperial house. The emperor's prerogative to grant privileges, favors, distinctions, cabinet posts, and other lucrative positions has been so exercised that a special and powerful circle of court adherents and favorites has been created known as the "important subject group" of the emperor. Ex-cabinet members, leading politicians, admirals, and generals compose this group. Around the court circles are to be found the most powerful and influential sections of the permanent

Hall

"Your Red scare against the union was a great success. They all joined the Communist Party!"

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state bureaucracy. The permanent state bureaucracy of Japan has no parallel in the modern imperialist states. It is a remnant of feudalism.

The emperor today is the center and rallying point of the most powerful sections of the bourgeoisie. Chief among these are the Mitsui, Mitsubishi, and Sumitomo combinations, which should considerably modify the term "moderate" as used in Japanese politics. These so-called moderate bourgeois groupings, while not abandoning the emaciated parliament, political parties, and the cabinet form of government, nevertheless place their main trust and reliance in the power of the emperor, who is becoming more and more the exponent of their interests in the struggle against the army groupings. The navy definitely leans to the "moderate" grouping.

THE ARMY of Japan is much more than the military apparatus of the state. Its officers, staffs, and bureaucracy have developed all the essential aspects of a political party. During election campaigns and between them, it issues propaganda and agitational pamphlets in millions of copies. The army as such is represented in the cabinet, but is not subject to its decisions. It is responsible to the emperor alone. The army officers have their roots and support among the old feudal landlords, the younger section of the state bureaucracy, and the more aggressive sections of the bourgeoisie (such as the munitions industry and certain export industries, such as cotton, often considered a "peaceful" industry).

The army formulates its foreign policy and often carries it out independent of the cabinet. This is most strikingly illustrated in China, in Manchukuo, and in the recurring border clashes with the Soviet Union. It is an open secret that the army occupied Manchuria without consulting the government or the emperor. Likewise, the army has its own definite domestic policies. It is the source and principal proponent of fascism. Fascism in Japan wears the army officer's uniform. The army is the bitterest opponent of the Diet, the political parties, and all democratic rights. It is the most bitter enemy of trade unionism and of social legislation. The army, through its minister of war in the cabinet, introduces and supports the most reactionary bills. The dismissed participants and plotters of the February 26 rebellion are now active leaders and organizers of civil fascist groups and societies and carry the army policy among the civilians. Now under the army leadership, they are preparing to launch a new reactionary pro-army political party.

The army at the present moment presents a fairly solid front to the moderate groups around the emperor. But within the army clique there are important divisions. The younger officers, headed by Generals Mazaki and Araki, together with the Kwantung army (the Japanese army of occupation in Manchuria), are the extreme fascist elements. General Hayashi, although not its leader, is a representative of the "centrist" group, while General Ugaki is the leading force among the "moderate" elements in the army.

The Sweeter Our Fruits . . .

It was said that oranges could not be
grown in the Soviet Union.
But there they are—
A new strain
Developed by crossbreeding Horticulture
to Socialism.

Where Wrangel's army was to defeat the
Reds,
Now the citrus groves,
Triumphantly fruitful,
With golden death-rays,
Vanquish the ghouls of another wish-
prediction.

There, O Massman,
Lift a festival beaker,
Drink
This tart sweetness of revenge
To the health of your comrades all over
the world.

Behind clenched teeth
In hells of "democracy" and fascism,
We taste
What you taste,
Your joy
Is our joy—
Of the inspiriting *example.*

Before 1918 we were "visionaries,"
Socialism "against human nature,"
But now
We point
☞ To Red Russia.

The sweeter our fruits,
The bitterer to profiteers.

H. H. LEWIS.

★

These divisions, with various shiftings and modifications, have existed in the army for a long time. Their sharp character was most clearly revealed in the premature February 26 rebellion. This ill-timed and largely unsuccessful putsch greatly discredited the army among the people. Yet despite this loss of prestige, and despite the fact that a score of the rebels were executed and hundreds removed from their posts, the army won a series of important concessions by the February 26 uprising. For over five months the army exercised a virtual dictatorship through martial law. It strengthened the inner discipline in the army. It received a dominating position in the Hirota cabinet; its main demands were granted. And, most important of all, it received a special imperial ordinance restoring an old privilege: that the war minister in all future cabinets must be an active general in army service. Previous to February 26, the war minister under special conditions could have been chosen from among the retired generals who are no longer under direct army discipline. This ruling gave the army clique unquestioned power to break any cabinet at any time by withdrawing its war minister or to prevent the formation of any cabinet by withholding its nomination of the war minister. The Hirota cabinet resigned because General Terauchi threatened to withdraw; General Ugaki was prevented from forming his cabinet for the simple reason that the army "could not find a general suitable" for him. General Hayashi formed his cabinet because the army agreed to nominate a war minister.

All the above facts illustrate and characterize the Japanese army as the political party of the most reactionary and most aggressive sections of the bourgeoisie. Needless to say, the common soldiers, as conscripts, are not included in this political characterization.

JAPANESE government spokesmen have at all times tried to impress the outside world with the legend of complete unity within the country. According to them, the only dissenters with the sacred national policy are a handful of Communists. The numerical extent of this "handful" is partly revealed by the fact that 60,000 suspects or released transgressors of the "dangerous thought" laws are under perpetual surveillance of the political police. Recent events disclose that there is anything but unity among the ruling classes. Their differences take the form of previously unauthorized seizure of foreign territory, armed uprisings, assassinations of capable leaders, rapid overthrow of cabinets, defiance of the emperor, etc. This is not all. The poverty-stricken masses are by no means in accord either with the policies of the divergent ruling group or with the agreed-upon policies of the rulers.

All this goes to prove that the crisis in Japan is growing deeper. The contradictions among the ruling classes are intensifying. Their imperialist objectives are already proving too costly. Add to this the smoldering discontent of the people. There is no way out for the ruling class except through a "big war"; but war threatens to destroy its entire system of exploitation. The army extremists propose to launch the war immediately, while the "moderates" are seeking for some vague insurance against the disaster and revolution which such a war is bound to bring in its wake. Despite these differences, war preparations are proceeding at an accelerated pace and the outbreak of war is approaching rapidly. The German-Japanese alliance, despite some opposition, is another step in this direction. The acute economic difficulties signalize a grave economic crisis which will sharpen and produce new political crises. The growing restrictions on democratic rights hamper the expression of the growing mass discontent. The people of Japan, however, are developing a mature political consciousness in the course of the turbulent political struggles among the rulers. Promise of prosperity from war and conquest leaves the masses cold when they see on every side the terrific cost in rising taxes, the soaring cost of living, the reductions in earnings, and the relentless strangling of their dwindling democratic rights.

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Wanted in Wales

A conversation in a stalled elevator doesn't always turn upon the weather

By Edward Newhouse

OUR car got stuck somewhere between the tenth and eleventh floors, and, no matter what the operator did, it would not budge. He hollered down the shaft, and they hollered back. Then he turned to me and said, "The motor's dead. Settle down to a good hour's wait."

He was a comparatively new man and I thought perhaps he had something to do with the stoppage. I asked if this had ever happened to him before, and he answered by saying he had been an operator for nine years.

All the operators I had ever known took their first job as a stop-gap, but either they couldn't find another job or they didn't get a chance to look for one. Why going up and down in an elevator should break a man's spirit I will not undertake to explain. Somebody's spirit being broken is a pretty shoddy expression anyway, but if it has any meaning at all, it certainly applies to a great majority of elevator operators.

It surprised me to hear that this little bantam had put in nine years, because all the times I'd gone up with him he exhibited no symptoms of anything like a broken spirit. During lunch hours he smoked cigarettes in front of the building and flicked the stubs halfway across the gutter with rather a saturnine aggressiveness. And I had never heard him violate the awful solitude of his car by a desperate little remark about the weather. Now he rested his elbows on the railing and studied me frankly. I was going to make use of the hour's wait, and asked him about wages and conditions. Sixty dollars a month, twelve hours a day, he said, but he seemed to think it was none of my business. He retaliated by asking what my line was and how much I earned. When I told him, he said, "I used to know a writer. Ever hear of Patrick McGill?"

"Yes. You Irish?"

"No, I'm Welsh; but I served with him in the London Irish Rifles. He made our company famous. Before the Marne, he wrote home to the *London Daily Mail* to send us a couple of soccer balls so we could relax, and they sent half a dozen. The last time we played with one was about an hour before we were moved up, and a kid called Alfred Shires tied it to his knapsack without letting the air out. We had to go over that day and do it through our own gas. These old-fashioned masks they give us, half the time we didn't even know if we were going in the right direction. There was no hand-to-hand fighting, because the Germans left their front line trench, and by the time this gas cleared up, somebody found Al Shires's pumped-up ball, but Al'd been blown to pieces. That's where McGill came in.

"I never knew how that ball got there. Maybe the force of the explosion, maybe someone had really booted it in the fog. So Pat McGill went and wrote an article that said every time Company 107 of the London Irish Rifles went over the top its men would dribble a soccer ball right flush up to the German trenches, that's the kind of hell-cats they were. I'll lay money there wasn't a paper in the country didn't mention that. This McGill went on to write more books than I ever read, but I lost sight of him after a year. He wasn't with us in Egypt, I know. Can I have a sheet of your paper?"

I gave him the classified ads section. He spread it on the floor and sat down Arab fashion.

"You wouldn't think a guy like me has been to all those places?" he said.

"Why not?"

"I been to all those places and then some," the Welshman said. "I been to Bombay, Calcutta, and Shanghai. I deserted in Calcutta and went to Shanghai on a Malayan tramp. They had no right to keep us away from home after signing an armistice. I got a cousin in Shanghai who owns an importing business. I suppose you wonder why a guy that's got a rich cousin in Shanghai should be running an elevator on Seventh Avenue. I suppose you think I been slinging the old b.s. all this time."

"No."

"If I was to tell half these things to the young snots on this crew, they'd be calling me Shanghai Jim and winking behind my back. Take it from me, I had a reason for going to Shanghai. Wales would have been no spot for a deserter. In Shanghai my cousin answered all the questions. That's where I should have stayed in the first place. I don't know why I came to this country except maybe I'm a sucker for blondes and there wasn't a single unmarried blonde in the city of Shanghai. The first blonde I saw in San Diego, I asked her to marry me. That one had enough sense not to, but the second one took a chance. She isn't blonde any more, but I'm still married to her. You don't think I'd have been operating elevators all this time if I didn't have to? Though this wasn't such a bad racket when I started. I had about six hundred dollars saved when I went to work at Tudor City, but I wasn't on the job more than a week before all these high pressure salesmen come around, says you better buy Tudor City stock, or else. Those stocks are worth their weight in cigarette ashes now. That was one of the few jobs I ever walked out on. Last Christmas I almost walked out on this one. You know who owns this building? Did you ever hear of Walter J. Matthews?"

"No."

"He's a millionaire twenty times over. Week before Christmas, his wife comes around here, smiling. She says, boys, wait'll you see the nice presents I got for you. So, finally, what do you think she give us in the name of the company? Assorted cheeses, one round box per man. One slice each of Rocquefort, Camembert, and the others, all wrapped in silver paper. You got to remember these people are millionaires twenty times over. We almost quit on them in a body that time. Say, are you sure you haven't heard of him?"

"I might have." I said. "His name must have slipped my mind."

"If you're a writer, you ought to have heard of him by now. You've heard of Charles Dickens, though?"

"Oh, yes."

"You've heard of a book he wrote, called 'Old Curiosity Shop'?"

"Oh, yes."

"Well, I was born across the street from the shop where he got his idea for that book," the operator said. He waited for me to say something.

"Yeah?" I said. "That's interesting."

"I'll say it's interesting. I intend to visit that street before I kick the bucket, family or no family, deserter or no deserter, rain or shine."

"Just on account of Dickens?"

"Dickens hasn't got a thing to do with it," he said. "I was born there, I tell you."

Miner A. Ajay

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An Interview with André Malraux

A famous French writer now visiting America makes some interesting predictions on France and Spain

By F. W. Dupee

WE met him the day after his arrival last week—a moist, snowy afternoon—in a New York hotel room. André Malraux, thirty-five years old, late chief of an air squadron of the Spanish government, author of four novels remarkable for their free, imaginative treatment of social themes—at least two of them, *Man's Fate* and *Days of Wrath,* have circled the world. Five days after the start of the Franco rebellion, Malraux was in Spain fighting on the side of Spanish democracy; and there he remained until early in February. In his capacity as man of letters, he helped to organize the notoriously individualistic writers of Spain into an effective anti-fascist body. As chief of the air squadron which bears his name, he participated in more than sixty engagements, chiefly around Madrid. On December 27, he was badly cut up in an accident to his plane. Recovered from his injuries, he came away on leave. He is now on a brief visit to this country, and will speak at meetings for Spanish democracy in several cities.

There was a minute of constraint as our interpreter and Edwin Rolfe and I filed into Malraux's room, for nobody knew in what language to begin. Spreading on a low table the copies of NEW MASSES which we had brought, Malraux leaned on his hands and looked briefly at the covers. There were energy and swiftness in the movements of his rather slight body. He had thin fingers, dark skin, blue eyes. His black hair, long and thick, sat on his head like a skull-cap. He looked up with a quick smile, and we all sat down, feeling pretty much at home. Intensity was his quality—an intensity that burned with the fine, even fire of a tungsten filament. He was sensitive, we felt, but neither embarrassed nor ingrown. It was a sensitiveness of the depths, not of the surface. He was quite willing, even eager, to talk. He may have suppressed an opinion here and there, when he felt it to be unimportant; but he kept back nothing of himself. And not only did he seem to appreciate thoroughly the value of his experiences, but he took an obvious pleasure in the words he used to describe them. His English was badly accented, but intelligent and resourceful. He spoke it without much assurance, but seemed to understand it readily enough. Several times he corrected the interpreter. A high regard for precision was evident in all his actions; not only in the rapid, controlled motions of his hands as he illustrated the points he was making in words, but also in the careful but swift fashion in which he formulated his replies. And so, in French and English, with many interruptions, questions, counter-questions, asides, and digressions, the conversation got under way.

QUESTION: Are you working on another book at present?

ANSWER: Yes, about Spain. It will have the intimacy and philosophic quality of *Man's Fate.*

Q.: We have wondered what the effect would be on our literature of a people's front in America. What would you say had been the effect of the French people's front on the literature of your country?

A.: It is impossible to say. The French people's front is hardly a year old. We cannot judge yet of its effects on literature.

Q.: You know André Gide's *Return From the U.S.S.R.,* and that it is being used by the enemies of the Soviet Union. What is your opinion of the book and what is Gide's position now?

A.: The opinions Gide expressed in that work were not final ones. I know that he is rapidly preparing another book on the same subject. The title of it will be, I understand,

Defenders

Oil Painting by William Gropper (A. C. A. Gallery)

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Retouches, which suggests that he has in mind a revision of his views. But I cannot say. We must wait until it is published.

Q.: We liked especially the passage in *Days of Wrath* that described the sensations of the hero, Kassner, during a dangerous airplane flight. Will you tell us how it feels to confront Nazi and Italian airmen in actual combat?

A. (after first refusing the question altogether): Well—heroes belong in books; and I would not care to speak of myself as if I were the hero of one of my own books. But I will tell you what I have gathered from other members of the squadron as to their sensations during the war. At the start of the war we were all happy to be in action, happy at the chance for a crack at Franco. The squadron was quickly organized on a basis of revolutionary discipline; I mean that the officers first were elected, then were obeyed. At that time our equipment was still very poor. We flew old transport planes hastily armed with machine guns. But in spite of this, we beat off Franco's planes without much trouble and had a number of fairly easy victories. The war at that stage was still largely an abstraction for us. After a few reversals, we had a better idea of what we were up against. "Here's war," we said to ourselves; "this is what it really means to fight fascism." And presently this stiff, conscientious determination of ours was to change into something else. Several members of our squadron were brought down behind the enemy's lines; and we who returned safely to our base had no way of knowing what had happened to them. We soon found out. A stretch of enemy territory fell into our hands. We discovered the bodies of some of our late comrades. They had been mutilated and many of them had been tortured alive. (The Spanish minister of war has photographs proving this.) One day, two men of our squadron were in the air, when suddenly their plane was damaged. One of them bailed out in the only parachute they had; and the other stayed with the plane, hoping to bring it down safely within our own lines. He did. A few days later an enemy plane appeared suddenly over our base. While we were getting ready to go up after it, something was dropped from the air in a parachute. While we hesitated, down it came, settling slowly in a field near by. There, cut to pieces and wrapped in a bag (and attached to his own parachute!) was the body of the comrade who had bailed out a few days before. Such incidents made a further change in our feelings.

We no longer felt merely determined: what we now felt was rage, fury. These were our emotions in the third period of the war, and I do not suppose they have changed very much since.

Q.: What do you know of the International Brigade, and has it been as effective in the war as we hear?

A.: The brigade has been *very* effective, and it is an interesting organization. It is made up of Italians, Germans, Frenchmen, Englishmen, etc.; of very young men on the one hand, and of men around forty on the other. The Germans and Italians, having known fascism at home, are frankly revolutionary. The other nationalities are inspired by general anti-fascist motives. Realizing that fascism does not respect national boundaries, they want to stamp it out wherever it appears. The older men in the brigade, the men around forty, are veterans of the Great War. They are in Spain because of the hatred of war and its causes which they learned in the years 1914-1918. The young men are drawn from the ranks of the great anti-fascist youth of Europe and the world.

Q.: There is a great deal of interest in this country in the French people's front. What do you think the Blum government will attempt next in the way of reforms? What will be its program, and will it move towards the left or the right?

A.: I can tell you this much, and I think it is very significant. At present there is a powerful movement directed towards the formation of a single unified workers' party for France, made up of the Communist and Socialist parties and other genuinely progressive forces. I think that this organic unity will be achieved and in action within three months.

Q.: What is your opinion of the present state of the Spanish war, and how do you think it is likely to develop?

A.: The war is just now at a very critical stage. It is impossible to say with any assurance how it will turn out. But I want to say this: the workers of America should remember the American Revolution and Valley Forge. In that struggle, the armies of progress were hard pressed at first. But they won in the end. Remember also your own Civil War. There the armies of the reactionary South came close to winning in the early days of the war, but in the end they lost. Remember also the Siberian phase of the Civil War in Russia. There, too, the armies of the people were close to defeat in the early days. Wrangel, commander of the White forces, made a two-faced deal, promising the peasants land, on the one hand, and on the other pledging to the big landowners the integrity of their estates. In this way, he kept the support of the peasantry for a few months. But when harvest time came, the contradictions in his promises became apparent. The peasants did not get their land, and they deserted him. In Spain there is a similar situation. Franco has also tried to reconcile with false promises the demands of the peasants and the demands of the landowners. At harvest time (July-August) he will probably seize the crop and give the peasants no land in return. Thus the peasants will discover that their real interests lie with the Spanish proletariat.

★ ★ ★

The Tomb

(For those who fell defending Spain)

After the last gun has split sky with echo of crumbling earth;
after the bones have whitened; after the fresh blood, thickened,
has dried with the dust; after the headless, unlimbed,
the lanced and lashed have been laid smooth in their rows,
as smooth as the grass which will soon spread their cover;
long after, after their sons have grown, and their sons' sons,
the tomb will stand. . . .

When the full harvest gathers from many throats a song rising
over threshed wheat, over bushels stacked and bales packed high,
beyond heavy purple vines; when their hands have made of molten ore
surer, stronger hands, steel-flexed, to hug the breadth
of their land with parallel rails, bringing warmth from the looms,
strength from wheels directed, dynamos controlled;
when the sons of that new Spain of peace and plenty
break sunlight with laughter, lie close in a night that is
everywhere soft, still, they will pause in a moment torn
from another day: this day, remembering the tomb: this tomb,
which you have blasted with bomb-shattered lungs,
scooped with jagged joints, mortared with spliced flesh,
and sealed forever in a sure faith hurled with every last agonized cry:
the tomb of fascism.

PENIA TAYLOR.

Arthur Getz

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Freedom Sprouts in Arkansas

The recent defeat of a sedition bill that menaced Commonwealth College signalizes a new militancy

By Arthur McEwen

TWICE within three months that arch foe of civil liberty, King Cotton, has been on the receiving end of an uppercut from progressive America and aroused workers and farmers of Arkansas.

Just now these determined liberty defenders have again wrenched the crushing yoke of plantation slavery by smashing a vicious anti-sedition bill. Last December they soaked a city marshal $3,500 on seven counts of outright peonage in the cotton kingdom of eastern Arkansas.

Intense nation-wide protest and Arkansas vigilance (the anti-Reaction kind) have just caused the legislature at Little Rock to kill a measure which provided five-year imprisonment for teaching workers and farmers how to better themselves. It was buried securely in the House of Representatives by a forty-six to nineteen vote.

While purporting to ban the study of communism and the "alleged teaching of illegal cohabitation," the bill was openly sponsored by twenty-two-year-old Representative Herman Horton (yes, he's from Craighead, a cotton county) as a second drive to close Commonwealth College.

Had "Baby Solon" Horton's planter-inspired bill become law, however, it would have been used not only to padlock the college. Workers' and farmers' education would have been eclipsed throughout Arkansas by the pall of political and economic illiteracy under which King Cotton rules. And that would have signaled for a new state-wide onslaught of vigilanteism against all militant organizations, especially the powerful Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.

Instead: Progressive unionism among Arkansas's impoverished farmers and hungry workers has come through another battle with stronger sinews. Indispensable training in organization for those who till and toil has been defended and advanced at the same time. Commonwealth College is plowing deeper and wider into its field, showing tenant farmers, sharecroppers, and wage-earners of the South ways of improving their lowest of all American standards.

And, not least, entrenched Reaction—King Cotton's rope-and-gun control—may be routed earlier than previously expected. Down on the plantations and up in the mountains of Arkansas, folks have learned something from Flint, the maritime strike, and Madrid.

In January 1935, Representative S. A. Gooch of Wynne, also a cotton county, pushed a similar sedition measure as far as the state senate. Failing there, he instigated a phony "legislative inquiry" of badgered witnesses against Commonwealth, because students and teachers from the college actively aided organization of sharecroppers in his plantation domain. This time he threw in with Horton.

The college has received scores of interested inquiries from prospective students ever since *Liberty* magazine in December smeared its lying pages with Hearstian dung about "nudity, co-ed dormitories, and communism," imagined to prevail on the campus. Preparations are now being rushed for an anticipated influx of new students when the spring quarter opens March 29.

Gordon

Congresswoman Caroline O'Day, like countless other vigorous protesters against the attempted suppression of academic freedom, saw the widest danger in it. She warned that the bill might even hit her personally for belonging to the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, since that body has recently been branded as "Red" too.

Francis J. Gorman, president of the United Textile Workers and a member of Commonwealth's advisory board; Oscar Ameringer, publisher of the *American Guardian* and also on this board, and the recent New York City mass conference of the American League Against War and Fascism—these typify the diverse progressive forces stirred into action for defeat of the anti-sedition legislation and for defense of Commonwealth College.

Telling support in this fight to keep Arkansas from seceding again beyond the pale of American democratic tradition was given splendidly by the labor press, several key capitalist organs, and all important state newspapers.

Possibly most decisive were hundreds of individual wires and letters that inundated the capitol. Speaker E. L. McHaney of the House, who finally came out against the bill, stated he gave up answering correspondence after the first fifty communications poured in.

But of perhaps equal strength were resolutions from dozens of union locals in varied sections of the country. Arkansas labor bodies, also, recognized and helped repel an imminent danger to their existence.

Declared readiness of the LaFollette senatorial committee on civil liberties to intervene upon the first overt violation of constitutional rights was a substantial factor in discouraging planters from playing their hand further.

Why such an effective array of progressive forces could be rallied is explained by conditions that yet remain:

Civil liberty is still at a low ebb in Arkansas. The tide is only beginning to turn, with repeal of the infamous anti-evolution law now before the legislature. Peonage continues without further prosecutions. Organizers' lives in some parts of eastern Arkansas are not worth a tin dime. The whips that flogged Willie Sue Blagden are still in circulation. "Enticement"—i.e., any manner of inducing workers or renters to leave their jobs or homes for striking or other purposes—remains today a serious crime. Polk County, because it is far from cotton areas, has for over thirty years been "lily-white," challenging any Negro found within its boundaries after nightfall.

In all this, the average Arkansan has clearly shown himself friendly toward labor organization and workers' education, or at least passively neutral. And no less than average residents of the forty-seven other states does he cherish the basic rights of learning and organizing.

But—mark this—isolated mountain and plantation life with its difficult contact has kept Arkansas labor considerably behind the rest of the movement. In only two or three cities and a few counties have unions secured a firm foothold. The heroic, terror-ridden Southern Tenant Farmers' Union as well as the Farmers' Union are beset with well-known handicaps.

The present gain for freedom is made in a state where a one-party power and a poll tax offer unique obstacles to establishing a farmer-labor party or its equivalent. This battle brought victory to the people of Arkansas and Commonwealth College around the slogan: "Let no one string barbed wire around our schools!"

Last year, when the state celebrated its admission to the union in 1836, organized workers and farmers rallied effectively to "Celebrate Arkansas's centennial by ending peonage!" and got City Marshal Paul Peacher convicted on slavery charges. Yet there remains a long rocky stretch before attaining even the degree of economic liberation that obtains in northern industrial states.

Arkansas's political emancipation, which hinges upon achieving such an economic advance, is a good piece farther along the road.

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NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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"Neutrality" Before Congress

THE neutrality issue is again before Congress and the people. The existing legislation expires on May 1, and three bills vie to replace it. The neutrality bill eventually passed is of special importance because, unlike the existing act, it will represent a permanent, not a temporary, policy. This permanent legislation will operate in a period which starts with an existing war in Spain, a free-for-all naval race, a political crisis in Japan, acceleration of the anti-imperialist front in China, and renewed struggle for independence against Italian fascism in Ethiopia.

Whatever differences exist among the three bills under consideration, there is nothing to choose in point of principle. The McReynolds, Pittman, and Nye measures all commit the United States to a policy of thorough-going isolationism. They do not permit distinctions between right and wrong, weak and strong, peaceful and warmaking, nations. On the other hand, the differences between the bills should not be neglected. The Pittman bill would simply make permanent the temporary legislation passed during the Italo-Ethiopian conflict, which gave discretionary power to the President in barring war materials to all belligerents, aggressor and victim alike. The Nye bill gives no discretionary power to the President, but lays an embargo on arms and munitions to belligerent Powers, at the same time permitting free trade in everything else on condition that the belligerents pay in advance and the shipment is made in foreign bottoms. The McReynolds bill goes beyond both of these bills in its viciousness. In addition to including civil wars as well as wars between nations within its scope, a last-minute rider makes it unlawful "to solicit or receive any contribution" in the United States for all belligerent Powers and opponents in civil wars. Representative McReynolds made no bones about the fact that the rider was aimed specifically at republican Spain.

What has happened is that every succeeding bit of neutrality has been worse than the preceding in response to a changing situation. The original act was passed during the Italo-Ethiopian conflict; in practice, only Ethiopia suffered because Italy was self-sufficient in arms. When the Spanish fascists took up arms against the republic, the original act was suddenly found "inadequate" because it did not include civil wars. A special resolution was rushed through on the second day of the present Congress barring arms to Spain; again the reactionary aggressors benefited, because Hitler and Mussolini were bountiful in their help to Franco, while the democratic lands hedged, delayed, and refused to sell supplies to democratic Spain. Even this measure is now considered "inadequate." The McReynolds bill would forbid the collection of money, food, and clothing for Spanish democracy.

Wire your Congressman to expose and vote against the whole fraud. The McReynolds bill is the worst and should get the heaviest fire. When you think of neutrality, think of what it would do to Spanish democracy, and you can't go wrong if you want democracy to win.

The Redwood Murder

THE cold-blooded murder of R. Norman Redwood, "sandhog" union leader, has again brought into prominence the menace of employer-and-gangster control in unions and the parallel necessity for the strengthening of rank-and-file activity and dominance in all labor organizations. Because of the tremendous progressive impetus of labor today, the Redwood murder assumes a significance far beyond the size of his small union (Local 102 of the Compressed Air Tunnel & Subway Workers) or the locality in which he worked. All signs thus far point to Sam Rosoff, multi-millionaire subway builder, as the man at least morally and perhaps more directly responsible for the killing. There is similar data on hand to prove that the so-called "jurisdictional dispute" between two locals (Redwood's 102 and Local 45) was actually the work of one Joseph S. Fay, friend of Jersey City's strike-breaking Mayor Hague. Fay, who is metropolitan business agent of still another local (125 of the Operating Engineers), had acquired a stranglehold on Local 45, to which Redwood, calling Local 102 on strike, would not submit. In addition, there are the signed affidavits of two officers of Local 102—business agent James Lynch and secretary Austin Muldoon—to the effect that they heard Sam Rosoff threaten to kill Redwood just three days before the actual murder occurred. Those who actually committed the murder are still at large, but it is important to bear in mind that among the main beneficiaries of Redwood's death were Rosoff and his fellow open-shoppers.

Almost without exception, the metropolitan press has strongly implied that Redwood's death was the work of other union members, motivated by disagreements arising solely out of the aforementioned "jurisdictional dispute." The papers have thus tried to pin responsibility for the killing on labor itself. Not a shred of evidence exists to support this view. Moreover, the very fact that these veiled attacks on other unionists are made, reveals both the source and the purpose of the charges: (1) the open-shop employers want to cover up all traces of their part in the affair and, (2) by placing the blame on union members, they intend thereby to discredit labor organization generally at a time when it is assuming unprecedented national importance.

In the face of these attacks (and in the face of everything that New York's Tammany gang and Jersey City's Hague mob will do to hush the present investigation), labor has one unvanquishable defense weapon: militant rank-and-file control of its own industrial organizations. It is the kind of control that will not permit A. F. of L. class-collaborationist policies to seep so far into union leadership that corrupt top men may play ball with employers against the interests of the union membership. Such rank-and-file control would automatically rid unions of racketeers like Joseph Fay, Kaplan, and their kind. It would destroy, by ever-alert vigilance, all possible links to employers, corrupt political groups, and underworld gangsters. Finally, it would force the reactionary press to drop the hot-chestnut explanation of "jurisdictional dispute," and focus criminal investigation where it rightfully belongs—upon the open-shop employers and their gunmen.

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READERS' FORUM

More on that "Hotel Bristol" business—Robert Briffault answers Henry Hart—Flood-control sabotage

● Reference has been made by Morris U. Schappes in your Readers' Forum of March 2 to the refutations published by Norwegian and Danish papers of the denials made by Leon Trotsky apropos the meeting between the defendant Holtzmann and Sedov Trotsky in the "Hotel Bristol" and Piatakov's trip to Copenhagen from Berlin by airplane.

It appears that Trotsky's defenders, in recent letters to both the *Nation* and *New Republic,* are most reluctant to part with these two "factual" grounds for their whole campaign to discredit volumes of testimony. More detailed information about both episodes has just come to my attention, and it might be well to communicate more facts about the Bristol episode and the "Piatakov" airplane to your readers.

The February 11 issue of the *Rundschau* reprints portions of an introduction by Martin Nielsen, editor of the Copenhagen *Arbeiderbladet,* to the Norwegian edition of D. N. Pritt's well-known pamphlet, *At the Moscow Trial.* A plan of the Café Bristol and the Grand Hotel Kobenhavn is part of the article, and I have enclosed it [see accompanying figure.—The Editors]. Nielsen writes about the Bristol:

"Nobody wants to deny that the old Hotel Bristol on the Rathausplatz was torn down in 1917 and not rebuilt again, but on the well-known corner of Reventlowsgade and Vesterbrogade [streets] is the well-known restaurant 'Alte Bretterhutte,' with an entrance on the corner of Reventlowsgade and Vesterbrogade. Next door, Vesterbrogade No. 9, is a newspaper stand of a certain international character where nationalist, white-guard, and Trotskyist newspapers from all over are sold. The entrance next to it, a little further down towards Colbjornsensgade, Vesterbrogade No. 9A, leads into a café across the front of which, in glaring neon lights, appears: 'Konditori Bristol.'

"Café Bristol is a café of a certain international character similar to cafés in the main streets of Berlin and Vienna, which primarily cater to foreigners, tourists, and casual passers-by.

"Café Bristol was opened in 1924, but at that time was located in the space at present occupied by part of the foyer of the Grand Hotel Kobenhavn and partly by the newsstand mentioned before. The situation was such that one had to cross the café in order to reach the elevators in the back which led to the roof terrace of the hotel. Only after the modernization of the Grand Hotel Kobenhavn was the Café Bristol moved further towards Colbjornsensgade with its own entrance on Vesterbrogade 9A.

"It has been established that this centrally-located Viennese café was for years the meeting place of Danish Trotskyists as well as for Trotskyists who came from abroad.

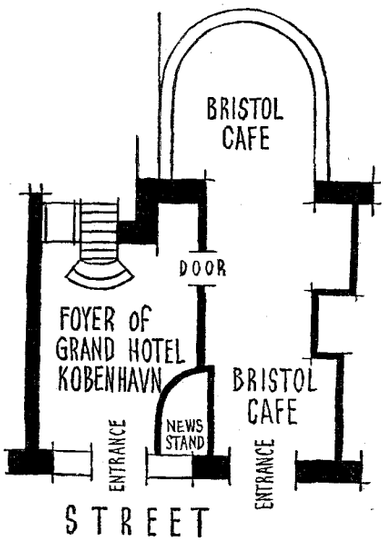
"It is not difficult to deduce from these facts that a foreigner would naturally identify the internationally known name of the Café Bristol with the name of the hotel, and there is no doubt that the Trotskyists met in the lobby of the Grand Hotel Kobenhavn, as the accused Holtzmann testified:

"'I agreed with Sedov that I would travel to see him in Copenhagen two or three days later and register at the Bristol Hotel, and that we would meet there. From the railway station, I went directly to the hotel and met Sedov in the foyer.'"

A glance at the plan of the hotel and café will show that they are linked by a door, and that the lobby immediately adjoins the café. The neon sign "Konditori Bristol" under such circumstances could easily have been associated with the hotel.

It is upon this single, easily understood discrepancy in the testimony of a foreigner to Norway, the accused Holtzmann, that the defenders of Trotsky seem ready to stake all.

As for the Piatakov airplane, Mr. Schappes referred to the confirmation of Piatakov's arrival by



The above diagram shows the plan of the Café Bristol and the Grand Hotel in Copenhagen. A radio photograph of the exterior of the hotel and café appears in the March issue of "Soviet Russia Today," published by the Friends of the Soviet Union. The photograph shows that the neon sign, "Konditori Bristol," extends over the entrance and windows of the café. A hanging sign, "Hotel," projects over the entrance to the hotel.

plane in Norway in the *Tidans Tegu* of Jan. 27. A Copenhagen paper, the *Dagens Nyheter,* gives some further information as to the hut in which Trotsky and Piatakov met. That paper published a picture of the hut, located in the great forest between Oslo and Honefoss, Trotsky's residence, and owned by Trotsky's host, Knudsen. Discussing the trip made by Trotsky and his secretary to this hut, the paper states:

"The otherwise completely unmotivated visit of Trotsky to this hut deep in the wilderness at a time when he was evidently ailing is surrounded by an inexplicable secrecy. Why did he and his secretary make this long and difficult trip into the forest during the winter only to return into his comfortable home in Honefoss twenty-four hours later? There is no other sensible explanation to this question than that he had to carry out some business which had to be hidden from the public. . . . There could hardly have been a better place for a secret conference than this little hut deep in the forest."

It would seem unlikely that an innocent man, charged with crimes of such magnitude as those presented at the trials, would rest his whole case on one, two, or three points to the exclusion of hundreds of pages of testimony over a period of about ten full days by thirty-three different persons. It is altogether likely that a guilty man would search through this great volume of testimony for a number of discrepancies, explicable in any event by the passage of time, and rest everything on these points.

But, in view of the above, even those matters chosen by Trotsky as his "last stand" are easily explained. His liberal defenders ought to get wise to themselves.

ANDOR BRAUN.

From Robert Briffault

● Far from being, as Mr. Hart supposes, the outcome of "haste, the tendency to incomplete thought," the transparently ostensible contradictions with which he charges me in your issue of January 12 [Readers' Forum] is the mature result of a twenty-five years' thrashing out of a somewhat complex problem. If Mr. Hart doubts my word, as he appears ready to do, let him turn up the section on "The Necessity of Intellectual Preparation" in my *Making of Humanity,* p. 283. I am proud to be able to say that my views have become considerably modified since I wrote the chapter, but my conclusion stands. I have come more and more to minimize the part of idealistic determinism. I am indeed now prepared to go so far (I don't know whether Mr. Hart is) as to contemplate with equanimity, and with the bloodthirstiness with which I am sometimes credited, the shooting of every intellectual, including Mr. Hart and myself. Nevertheless, I still maintain, as I did in 1919 and long before, that intellectuals have their use at a given phase of the historical process of material determination. In that opinion I am in the company of Marx and Lenin. Marx wrote books. The elucidator of economic determinism was therefore a believer in idealistic determinism. Lenin consistently minimized his own part in intellectual leadership, yet he admitted that he did have a part to perform, namely, to give articulate expression to the economically determined will of the masses. My estimate of the intellectual's function as an idealistic determinant is identical with that of Marx and Lenin. In one of his most brilliant elucidations of the economically determined will of the masses, Lenin was guilty of the same sort of contradiction as that which I am charged with by Mr. Hart. He said: "Support this state, this beastly political bureaucracy; it is needed now. . . . then smash the state." The idealistically determining intellectual is necessary to formulate the will of the masses, to purge it of obfuscating injected opiates and poisons, to make the masses "class conscious." When that has been done, his task is accomplished. Then shoot the intellectual. He is apt to be a dangerous worm.

I have never even hinted at a claim to be the enouncer of the economic and social determination of mind. I have, somewhat shyly, excused myself for hammering ceaselessly at the fact because I found the tiresome repetition was still needed even after my exhaustive examination of it in *The Mothers.*

ROBERT BRIFFAULT.

Sabotaging Flood Control

● It is not likely that many of your readers, after reading Mr. Rolfe's excellent article ["Who Is the 'God of Floods'?"—issue of Feb. 9], sat down and sent their congressmen a vote of thanks for the flood-control legislation passed at the last session. But the full story is even more foul.

The Democratic machine has taken great pains to keep the story a secret, and the Republicans have, for obvious reasons, kept quiet.

After the record-breaking floods last Spring, both Democratic and Republican congressmen rushed to the radio and promised flood-control legislation. The Omnibus Act, cited by Mr. Rolfe, was passed—it "authorized" $320,000,000 of federal money, for flood-control projects. In addition, the Mississippi River Act was also passed—it "authorized" $272,000,000 for other projects.

But—here is the secret—*not one penny was appropriated* for carrying out either of these flood-control measures. The whole thing was an empty gesture to fool the people. A play on words—authorizations instead of appropriations! Thus do the politicians amuse themselves while flood victims are drowned or left homeless.

Nowhere, either in the radical or conservative press, has this "double-cross" by Congress been made public. The only place that it apeared was in *Facts for Farmers,* August number, 1936. I have checked the account and found it to be correct. It is high time that the secret should be made known.

A. ROGER PAXTON.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Jackson's Marxian "Dialectics"—Stanislavski tells how—A poem about Aircraftsman Shaw

T. A. JACKSON was a British Socialist until the Communist International was formed, when he became a charter member of the British Communist Party. He has served on that party's central committee, and has spent his life in working-class struggles and especially in workers' education. He speaks with the ease and authority that come only from much study and long experience.

Dialectics * is not a technical philosophical study of dialectical materialism. Such a study is, indeed, all the more necessary now that Jackson has analyzed the whole of Marxism, and so effectively portrayed the dialectical inter-relationship of all its aspects. There are many and important questions of philosophy, of logic and the theory of knowledge, that Jackson had neither the time, nor, possibly, the equipment to handle. But any book on the subject which fails to take into account the whole Marxist synthesis as Jackson has developed it is doomed to be academic and nugatory. In other words, just as Marxist economics can and must be developed as a special subject, so must its philosophy; but woe unto those who seek such development in isolation from Marxism as a whole.

We are often told that Marxism is an integration of utopian socialism, British political economy, French materialism, and Hegelian dialectics. Jackson does not merely tell us this; his whole book is a vivid and concrete exemplification of it. The method of the book as well as its contents justifies its title. There is nothing finished about it. Jackson's method enables him to present Marxism as the natural development of modern thought, the counterpart of the dialectical movement of capitalist society, and at the same time as an instrument for the overthrow of that society. In this sense, the book has no end as it has no beginning. If Strachey's excellence consists in his ability to apply a Marxist analysis to given contemporary situations, then Jackson's lies in his presentation of the Marxist method itself.

Dialectics is the "other side" of Mehring's life of Marx. Jackson does not concern himself with the life of Marx but with the life-history and morphology of the Marxian idea, as developed through Marx and Engels, Lenin and Stalin, through the very process of the capitalist world in its rise and decline. He makes a remarkable combination of logical and historical analysis, weaving into one pattern the development of the ideas in the minds of Marx and Engels and the whole structure of Marxist ideology. The book consists of three parts: (1) a commentary on all of Marx's major writings; (2) a theoretical development in terms of new knowledge and subsequent history; and (3) a survey and criticism of the major critics and distorters.

"Marxism considered as an objective fact is a social *movement.*" Thus Jackson begins. But as a social movement it can be "broken down" into two inseparable components. The one is "the theoretical movement for socialism and communism"; the other, "the spontaneous *practical* struggles of the proletariat." According to Jackson, it was Marx's and Engels's glory to have brought these into a synthetic unity, which viewed from one side is a social movement, from the other, an all-comprehensive method and theory. He treats the *Communist Manifesto* as the pivotal point in the theoretical development of Marxism. Up to that point Marx and Engels are formulating their general presuppositions, sharpening their weapons. From then on " 'the word became flesh'—the theory and practice of two individuals became the developing Theory and Practice of a world-transforming movement, the revolutionary proletarian movement, against the Bourgeois Order and for a Communist Order." Or, as he puts it in another place, the slogan " 'Our business is to change the world' emerged as the objective slogan: *'Workers of the world, unite!'* "

As illustrations of the fertility of Jackson's book, we might take two passages concerning the relations of Marxism to mechanical materialism. The first has to do with the social consequences of a lack of dialectics. Jackson writes:

> In fine, on the "mechanical" materialist view society is a *structure.* It may be well designed or ill, well built or not so well. It may need expansion and enlargement or contraction; or it may need pulling down and rebuilding. One thing it cannot do, and that is *to transform itself in virtue of its own inherent motive forces.* Hence it followed, for those who supposed themselves in possession of a new plan of social organization, that their standpoint was not that of the concrete society of their day, but one which "towered above" that society and enabled them to penetrate beyond all its delusions to a more perfect conception. (p. 81.)

There in a few lines is the difference between Marxism and all other earlier and later utopianism, anarchism, or social reformism. There we have the leading consequence of the application of Hegelian dialectics to society. The second passage concerns the transformation Marx made in materialist philosophy by his broadening of the concept of matter. It is the failure to grasp this that lies like a stumbling block in the path of many today who, while sympathetic to Marxism in practice, are afraid of dialectical materialism.

> Marx's revolution in Materialist *doctrine* consisted in nothing less than an immense quantitative extension of (with its concomitant qualitative change in) the *material Reality* from which he explained men's ideas, and Thought-activity generally. The eighteenth-century materialists had taken into account only the phenomena of external and internal Nature, and those of personal association. . . . *Marx saw that social relations were positive material facts which, developing in accordance with their own special law, not only operated as determinants in themselves but radically transformed and retransformed the operative significance of the phenomena of Nature and of association.* (p. 354.)

This broadened conception of material fact underlies the whole of the Marxist interpretation of history and avoids the innumerable difficulties its often well-meaning expositors get themselves into. What it says, in effect, is that there is not a material world on one side and a human, social, thought world on the other, but that all social relations, ideas objectively expressed, works of art, etc., etc., are material facts and can themselves be causal determinants of further material, social, cultural events. The materialist conception of history attempts to discriminate, from among all these *material facts,* those which play the more dominant role in historical movement.

Then there is Jackson's invective. Fortunate the "expounder" of Marx who doesn't come in for a tongue-lashing. He takes them singly or as a group with equal equanimity. The MacDonalds, Macmurrays, Caseys, Postgates, Coles, not to mention our own Eastmans and Hooks, come in for a drubbing. What Jackson objects to is that those who "set out to 'simplify' Marx commonly begin by reducing him to a *simpleton,* and those who offer to 'explain' him are as a rule primarily concerned only to *explain him away.*" There are only a few pages, for example, on Sidney Hook (who will complain that he deserves more), but they are enough to make Hook at least seriously suspect to anyone who reads. Hook's "leftism" amuses Jackson, just as G. D. H. Cole's difficulty in determining whether Marx's theory of value has any point of contact with prices provokes the question as to whether Cole's theory has "any point of contact" with Marx. Jackson is not content to dis-

James Kelly

* DIALECTICS: The Logic of Marxism, and Its Critics—An Essay in Exploration, by T. A. Jackson. International Publishers. $2.50.

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pose of anyone without a witticism, but before the witticism, there is always thorough and sound theoretical analysis.

A reviewer cannot profitably analyze this work further. Every phase is rich in solid analysis and in illuminating suggestions. The relatively few pages on Marx's *Capital* are a masterpiece in themselves. Nowhere has the use of the dialectical method derived from Hegel been so convincingly presented as the *sine qua non* of Marxian political economy. The reader actually sees the most difficult concepts of Marxian economics dialectically unfold themselves with utter clarity under Jackson's skilled analysis. These pages alone place the book in the first order of Marxian interpretations. The book has one fault. It needed an editor's blue pencil. The first 180 pages or so are none too well organized and tend to be repetitious. The same is true of the last 160 pages on critics of the dialectic. The middle portion is solid. Careful editing would improve future editions, but while a good editor might improve it, Jackson alone could have written it. STUART GREENE.

Precepts from a Master

AN ACTOR PREPARES, *by Constantin Stanislavski. Theatre Arts, Inc.* $2.50.

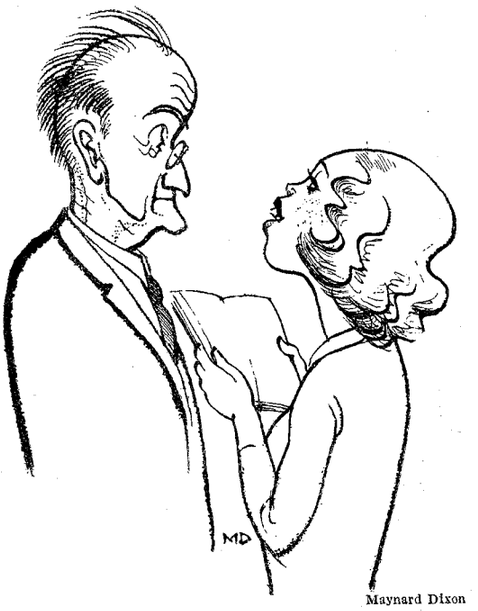
IT is impossible to review this magnificent statement of the Stanislavski acting method in the space allotted. This method has been the most important contribution to the acting art of our times. One point, however, must be made in approaching this book to prevent either a slavish acceptance or a knavish rejection of the method described.

In *Art and Society*, Plekhanov shows how the formality of French tragic acting arose from the formality of the plays which, in turn, had their origin in the aristocratic tradition of French tragedy—a tradition with its own economic and social relations. If we were able to do the same thing for the Stanislavski method, showing its relation to the plays of Chekhov, for example, and the relation of these plays to late-nineteenth-century czarist Russia, we would be in a much better position to judge what part of the method is useful for American actors and American plays, and what part of the method would be confusing to and in violation of the American theater.

There is no doubt that there are great sections of Stanislavski's method, notably the emphasis on "objectives" and "concentration of attention" which may be and have been found useful in our theater. There are other sections, "emotion memory" for example, which may be confusing. The only criterion by which we can judge the helpful from the hampering is by an examination of our own plays —plays which, on the whole, call for a different quality of communication from actor to audience from those of the Moscow Art Theater or the Théâtre-Français.

The American theater has great artists but no method—at least no conscious method. And where there is no conscious method, we are apt to get haphazard acting, uneven and unpredictable actors. It is in the cards that a method suitable to and growing out of American life, plays, and acting will be forthcoming. Until that time it is an urgent task of theater workers to study such excellent and stimulating books as this in order to be better prepared for their own job.

MICHAEL BLANKFORT.



Maynard Dixon

"But, Professor, if they're going to burn books, I don't see why they shouldn't burn yours."

Lawrence in Verse

LAWRENCE: THE LAST CRUSADE, *by Selden Rodman. The Viking Press.* $2.50.

THE attractive and important thing about Selden Rodman's "dramatic-narrative" poem is its theme. As a subject for a long poem about the modern world, Mr. Rodman's choice of T. E. Lawrence could hardly be bettered. Lawrence's life—which in this poem is divided into three parts: the young archæologist at Carchemish; Lawrence of Arabia; and Aircraftsman Shaw—contained almost all of the elements that have been and still are the requisites of the two major poetic forms, epic and tragedy. Swiftness and variety of action, conflicting and opposing forces, events of world-wide import, and a commanding central figure—these are the elements at hand, ready to be taken up by the poet and given perspective, order, and illumination. The poet's ability to do this will depend largely on his interpretation of Lawrence, which in turn will be conditioned if not determined by his understanding of the events and forces that shaped Lawrence's career.

Now, the various interpretations of Lawrence that are current—that would make him a modern hero, a man of mystery, a saint, a prophet, a leader of men, and fascism only knows what else—are essentially false, since they disregard or deny the facts about Lawrence and his epoch, and offer instead one of a variety of romantic-fatalistic explanations of his life.

But to consider him in relation to the social structure of his time is to see his tragedy in a truer and more dramatic light. Lawrence was *potentially* a figure of heroic stature; and he was, in the deepest sense of the term, a good man, one who gave his training and experience as well as the best years of his life to aid a downtrodden and exploited people, only to find that he and the people he had served had been sacrificed to the ruthless economic imperialism of his epoch. This betrayal, which led to bitter disillusionment and to his subsequent withdrawal from public life, is surely the focal point in a career that provides abundant material for a contemporary epic poem.

Lawrence: The Last Crusade, unfortunately, is not of epic quality. In the first place, Mr. Rodman seems not to have made up his own mind about Lawrence. He apparently wants us to see him as a man betrayed by British and Continental imperialism, yet at crucial points his interpretation leans too heavily on that bourgeois idealism which was the source of Lawrence's own confusion; which led him to consider his betrayal the result of some irremediable fault in human nature, although his own experience had shown him that not human nature, but a particular social system was responsible. We see this idealism very much in evidence in the first section, "The Lamp," as well as in the highly romantic conclusion of the poem, whose last section is significantly entitled "The Wheel." As a consequence, Lawrence emerges as a romantic hero rather than a man of epic or tragic proportions. This is the more regrettable because Mr. Rodman does have a sense of architecture and dramatic invention, as is evidenced by two scenes wherein Lawrence is forced to make a decision that constitutes a definition (in dramatic terms) of his character and of his relation to past and future events —I refer to his conference with representatives of the English General Strike and to his meeting with General Balbo, during which Balbo tries to persuade Lawrence that he would make the ideal leader of fascist England.

Yet even if one accepts Mr. Rodman's interpretation of Lawrence, the poem remains unsatisfactory. Its flaws, which are many, are almost wholly attributable to hasty and careless writing. Vague, general words are used where the context requires concrete ones; the diction more often than not is undistinguished; and the blank verse is flaccid and full of padding. Moreover, Mr. Rodman's insensitivity to rhythm and language is such that he does not hesitate to introduce haphazard and annoying rhymes from time to time and even archaisms like "ere" and "lo" in conversations. The following passage is representative:

> Also he remembers
> The dead upon the plain near Jebel Druse
> Seen through a window in the wall of night,
> Wonderfully beautiful. Even as he watched
> While Arabs in the valley yelled for plunder,
> Quarrelling, boasting what they could endure,
> He wondered how he envied these their quiet
> Death, that whether he won or lost, was sure.

In the face of such defects and limitations as I have mentioned, it may seem anomalous to

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say that *Lawrence: The Last Crusade* is not dull reading. That, however, is only another way of saying that the strength and scope of the theme have not been entirely engulfed by Mr. Rodman's verse. T. C. WILSON.

Yes and No

THE INVADERS, *by Stuart David Engstrand. Alfred A. Knopf.* $2.50.

TALENTED as it unquestionably is, only the first ninety-odd pages of Stuart Engstrand's first novel can with honesty be called completely successful. These contain a well-written, well-realized study of three people confined to a small and unprofitable farm: a young truck farmer, his widowed mother, and his neurotic, city-born bride. The antagonisms inherent in this situation ripen quickly in an atmosphere of mid-western summer heat, hard work in the fields, and anxiety over the crop—an atmosphere which Engstrand paints in as freshly and easily as though he had never seen it done before. Meanwhile, the farmers of the region, exploited by the local cannery, are learning class-consciousness and the principles of unionism and strike strategy from an organizer from the city. And for a time it looks as though Engstrand was to accomplish the almost unprecedented feat of integrating a family drama, motivated in this case by the Œdipus complex, with a social drama based on the class struggle. The two themes are brought together with excellent effect in a scene where Miriam, the bride, surrounded by a crowd of neighbor families, who have gathered both to welcome her to the countryside and to discuss the Union, feels her alien-ness, resents the attention Fred, her husband, gives to their guests, and so wanders off and goes swimming by herself. Miriam's peculiar quality of willfulness is never more convincing than at this moment, when it is shown to be heavy with possibilities of tragedy, in both a social and a domestic sense.

The fine promise of the first stretch of the book is not to be realized, however. Simple, easy-going, fairly literal so far, the novel is presently racked to pieces as the author tries to twist an elemental poetry and symbolism from it. It first comes to grief in a storm—the factitious big storm of the conventional rural novel—where in a single evening Fred's mother is drowned and his wife seduced by the organizer. Isn't this "coincidence," and as such doesn't it introduce in a rather abrupt fashion an effect of literariness which is pretty much at odds with the tone of the preceding section? And to add to that effect, the mother's death inspires Engstrand to a sudden, unprepared flight into mysticism.

> The earth had taken her as it had taken his father. Too long she had hung with her breasts and belly and thighs temptingly over the earth, until now with delicious humor the parent-lover-god had laughed darkly and drawn her forever to it.

The novel never quite recovers from the big storm. On the story level, it continues the narrative of the farmers and their strike against the cannery. But the story, the mere succession of happenings, now begins to dominate. The relation of the characters to the strike and to one another ceases to be worked but with any inevitability; and Engstrand no longer makes his points with his former deliberation. As a result, the characters become more and more indistinct—mere agents of an action which must be carried through to the end; and with them the plot, too, grows unreal, particularly when it involves a departure from the simple reporting of the strike. On the other hand, there are wildly pathological developments in connection with Miriam—developments for which we have not been sufficiently prepared; and the novel ends with a kind of witches' dance of horror and death in the millpond which, to this reviewer, seems more of a grand romantic finale than a solution. As Miriam, her face permanently disfigured by a scar, goes away with the organizer, and her strange, hunchbacked lover, Jo-Jo, lies drowned in the pond, one looks back to the natural, believable beginnings of the story and wonders what has caused all this havoc.

One can only guess. Perhaps Engstrand, dissatisfied with the plain reporting of the average life and action, wanted to build a kind of psychological fantasia on the barrens of modern naturalism. Perhaps, also, he wanted to discover a personal ideology based on the revolutionary point of view, an emotional and imaginative interpretation of the class struggle which would be his own. If so, he has one's entire sympathy; and the better sections of this first novel suggest that he may eventually succeed. But he has made the mistake here of taking over large fragments from certain writers—D. H. Lawrence and others—whose psychology and ideas were based on assumptions very different from his own.

F. W. DUPEE.

"... Indivisible"

REPORT, BRUSSELS PEACE CONGRESS. *Secretariat, International Peace Campaign.*

PEACE is indivisible.

This was the keynote of the World Peace Congress held in Brussels last September. It sounded in the stirring address of Pierre Cot, French Minister of Aviation, and in that of the other delegates to the Congress. Lord Robert Cecil, President of the International Peace Campaign, which prepared and brought the Congress into being, said in his opening speech: "What has brought together this imposing assembly? The answer may be given in four words: Common Danger and Common Purpose—wars and rumors of war meet us wherever we turn and whatever we do. The governments of many countries seem bent on world suicide while the peoples are passionately anxious for peace . . . but in the end it is the peoples who will be the strongest, if only they will exert their strength."

Sid Goldliff

This report of the Brussels Congress of the International Peace Campaign, published under the auspices of the International Secretariat of the I.P.C., contains the proceedings of the Congress, addresses by leading delegates, reports, resolutions, a brief history of the Peace Campaign, list of delegates and the organizations they represented. It is profusely illustrated and documented. The volume is available in English and French, with editions in German, Spanish, Portuguese, and Chinese to appear shortly. There were at the Congress nearly five thousand delegates from forty countries—representing trade unions, agricultural and coöperative organizations, ex-servicemen, churches, women's organizations, peace associations, the World and National Committees Against War and Fascism, the Federation of League of Nations Societies, youth organizations, intellectual and professional associations; men and women from every walk of life, white, black, brown.

The printed word cannot transmit adequately the living inspiration and enthusiasm of this magnificent peace congress—a united demonstration of the will to peace, a militant determination to resist war and warmakers, which delegates and visitors experienced and will retain for the rest of their lives. Nevertheless, even the reading of the addresses and resolutions, the study of the composition of the Congress, the plans made to extend the work for peace among the peoples of the world, will inspire every sincere worker for peace to join in the common effort of building a strong defense against the twin dangers of war and fascism. In the words of Marcel Cachin, Communist Senator in France: "We hate war with all our hearts. We know that war would pile up for the whole world devastation, suffering, useless indescribable horrors . . . Friends, to action for the peace of the world! . . . Let us take an oath to stand firm, united, and resolute in defense of peace." Or, as our own Dr. Harry F. Ward, Chairman of the American League Against War and Fascism, put it: "I come here from a country whose people, unlike yours, can sleep peacefully without fear of an enemy invasion. . . . Today the aggressor is both an aggressor against peace and against democracy . . . Americans are beginning to understand that they will have to choose between collective security and collective death. . . . The International Peace Campaign must become a great people's movement." The *Charter of Peace*, adopted by the Congress, ends with this ringing declaration: "In this hour of crisis our International Peace Campaign invites all the peoples to action in defense of peace . . . to create a powerful, popular movement which will prevent the forces of militarism from leading humanity to its own destruction by

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A Poison Pen

LAURELS, *A Monthly Chronicle of Military History in the Making, Vol. I, No. 1.* 35c.

FASCISM in America has kept itself pretty well under cover, with the exception of Gerald Smith's rabble-rousing and the private armies like Victor McLaglan's, which recently admitted that it was preparing to fight the enemies of "American ideals." In journalism there has been little open fascism, though at least two prominent magazines have been riding blind-baggage on the Rome-Berlin express. But at last we have a straightforward militaristic magazine, published in the interests of "national defense" and using that phrase and a pretended impartiality to glorify fascist exploits in Europe. This magazine is *Laurels,* which is just making its first appearance from Detroit, city of the du Pont plants and home of the Black Legion. And, indeed, the whole thing is Black Legion ideology in enticing make-up. Selling at thirty-five cents a copy, published by Edmond C. Fleming and edited by Reginald W. Crowly, the first issue of *Laurels* is being distributed nationally (with subscription envelopes) to R.O.T.C. members, reserve officers, and business men who should be "interested."

Laurels explains its symbolism as "the emblem of the soldier," whose "human virtue . . . has lighted the world. . . . His spiritual ardor for purification—or the crushing of evil—and for truce or peace is little heeded by the peoples. We, who are soldiers, know full well that our laurels are of the spirit." And we, who have read such stuff before, know just what to make of it. We know just what is to be found in the rest of the magazine. First of all, the foreword explaining that it has no affiliations, no outside stockholders, and of course no point of view. It will not accept advertisements "of pacifist societies or of corporations *popularly supposed to be* seeking profits from war" (italics ours). But *Laurels* should have stuck to its apostrophes to the glory of war and victorious peace—the sentences begin to get their feet tangled: "*Laurels* will never be militaristic or pacifistic, but it will always uphold adequate preparation for national defense *and oppose subversive mentality.*" Just as we expected.

The contents, too, follow the anticipated pattern. There are enough pictures of shattered Toledo to awaken the destructive lusts of those who have them, and there is great praise for the defenders of the Alcazar. There is no good word in the magazine for the heroes of the other side, the defenders of Madrid. On the contrary, this impartial magazine speaks of the officially elected gov-

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ernment as "a hodgepodge of leftist politicians," every variety of Socialist, Communist, and Anarchist, whom the Soviet proletariat regards "as brothers." There is this further qualification: "The government forces have been termed the Loyalists, a term which has a very high-sounding righteous ring, but they are also known as Reds." *Laurels* implies that there are actually more workers in Franco's fascist army; his "followers are almost all Spaniards, with a small contingent of Moors and a Foreign Legion" not comprised of mercenaries but of "actually patriotic people of Spanish blood, mostly from Mexico and South American countries." Try figuring out that last little twist: it's an admirable example of fascist logic.

But why spend any more time with *Laurels?* It's not much fun playing a game when you know all the moves to come. Yes, there are pictures glorifying Hitler Youth, while "Fascist Youth Greets Count Ciano," Mussolini's son-in-law who has just helped the Reichsführer drive a line of spikes across Europe. And one picture showing some bewildered Negro boys trying to march in formation is captioned "Ethiopian Youth is Learning Discipline." There are various sections on world politics and on international preparations for war, generally written up as "defense" measures. Military tactics are discussed simply but thoroughly, Germany and Italy getting plenty of space. They are "realists in foreign policy," and now we know why: "The decision rests with a single individual and is not subject to review by a deliberative body." Yes, now we know a lot. So it isn't surprising to find *Laurels* sniggering because the committee on Spanish neutrality exonerated Portugal and Italy but "was silent about Russia." Then comes the awaited blast against Russia, whose "trumpetings against the countries that crush communism within their own borders seem to have been blown under the direction of the Communist International committee. . . . It failed of its purpose. British and Swiss labor turned thumbs down on the Communists." After this magnificent impartial gloating, a reader can easily believe the ad on the last page: "Read the World's 15 Greatest Newspapers or Read *Laurels*—The results are the same!" Its "absolutely unbiased" contents will make "every business man, professional man, and public official . . . recognize the importance of the news contained in *Laurels.*" *Jawohl!* Ask Fritz Thyssen.

HARRY THORNTON MOORE.

Brief Reviews

NEW THEATRE & FILM, published monthly October to May inclusive, bi-monthly June to September. Editorial Board: George Redfield, Robert Stebbins, Edna Ocko, Eleanor Flexner. March, 1937. 25c.

Here is the reorganized succcessor to *New Theatre* magazine. It runs to sixty-four pages and cover, and is marked by the profusion of line and half-tone illustration which characterized its predecessor. Arriving too late for anything like a thorough review in this issue of the NEW MASSES, it almost reviews itself in its table of contents, which includes,

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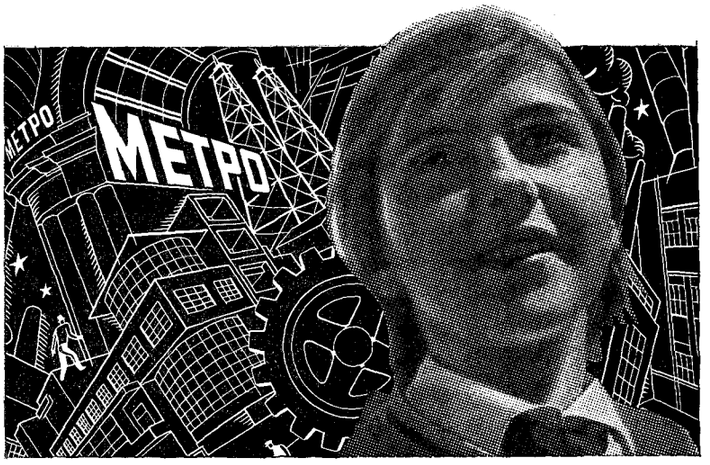

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among other things, the following: a scene from *The Silent Partner,* a new play by Clifford Odets; an exceedingly interesting article—really two reviews—written by Maxim Gorky in 1896 on motion pictures made by Lumière (Gorky remarks: "It is terrifying to see this gray movement of gray shadows. . . . A wide use can be predicted, without fear of making a mistake, for this invention"); a critical study of the plays of Lillian Hellman by John Howard Lawson; a complete one-act play by Paul and Claire Sifton; an article by Ralph Bates on the Spanish theater and the influence on it of the civil war; reviews of plays by John Gassner, of movies by Robert Stebbins—well, that's about half the contents, so you can see. . . . A. W. T.

BLACK LAWS OF VIRGINIA, *by June Purcell Guild. Whittet & Shepperson, Richmond, Va.* $2.

The subtitle of this small book, a work of value for any student of the Negro question, practically tells the story of its contents: "A summary of the legislative acts of Virginia concerning Negroes from the earliest times to the present." In accordance with this plan, the author has made digests of Virginia statutes and proceedings, from the day in 1630 when "Hugh Davis (was) to be soundly whipped, before an assembly of Negroes and others for . . . defiling his body in lying with a Negro," to the law of 1936 relating to the Negro's right of admission to the Virginia state colleges. Some of the chapter headings read as follows: The Struggle for Racial Integrity: 1630-1932; Criminal Law and the Negro: 1692-1928; Development of Free Compulsory Education for Negroes and Whites: 1631-1936; War and the Negro: 1723-1928.

Miss Guild's sympathetic introduction reveals that her work has been inspired by something more than scholarship. If we study the history of legal discrimination against Negroes, she says in effect, it is in order that we may abolish it. F. W. D.

I AM A WOMAN WORKER, A SCRAPBOOK OF AUTOBIOGRAPHIES. *Edited by Andria Taylor Hourwich and Gladys L. Palmer. The Affiliated Schools for Workers, Inc.* 50c.

An excellent selection of stories written by women workers from the various workers' schools, divided into five sections: Getting a Job, Life in the Factory, Open Shops and Company Unions, Trade Unions and Organized Shops, On Strike. Each story is personal and is written simply and sincerely with a growing awareness that the struggle of the worker against low wages, poor working conditions, company unions, and strikebreaking is a real theme in American life, and something to be recorded. The book is a significant contribution to the labor movement in the United States and should encourage the publication of many more like it. J. S.

★

Recently Recommended Books

The Croquet Player, by H. G. Wells. Viking. $1.25.
Some of My Best Friends Are Jews, by Robert Gessner. Farrar & Rinehart. $3.
Are You a Stockholder?, by Alden Winthrop.
On This Island, by W. H. Auden. Random House. Covici, Friede. $2.50.
Unemployment Relief in Periods of Depression, by Leah H. Feder. Russell Sage Foundation. $2.50.
America Today, a book of 100 prints chosen and exhibited by the American Artists' Congress. Equinox. $5.
Idaho: A Guide in Word and Picture, prepared by the Federal Writers' Projects of the Works Progress Administration. Caxton. $3.
This Is Your Day, by Edward Newhouse. Lee Furman. $2.50.
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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Two W.P.A. plays and an Arthur Kober comedy—A new Soviet film and some others

WHEN the curtain fell at the end of the first act of the new W.P.A. production, *Power,* I was about convinced that this kind of straightforward blackboard treatment, pointed up periodically with dialogue dramatizing the essence of the clash of ideas, was the way to argue a point on the stage. It seemed a method which on the one hand could be more factual and explicit than was possible to a more traditional dramaturgic treatment, and at the same time could carry more conviction than the older forms because there was less offense to credibility than in a character-and-situation drama in which the action unfolding in the lives of a set of particular people was supposed to tell a story essentially general in its implications. I say I was "about convinced," and I am still pretty much of that opinion; yet when I recall such a happy marriage of excitement, dramatic wallop, and ruthless social exposé as delivered by *Spread Eagle,* for example, I am not so sure.

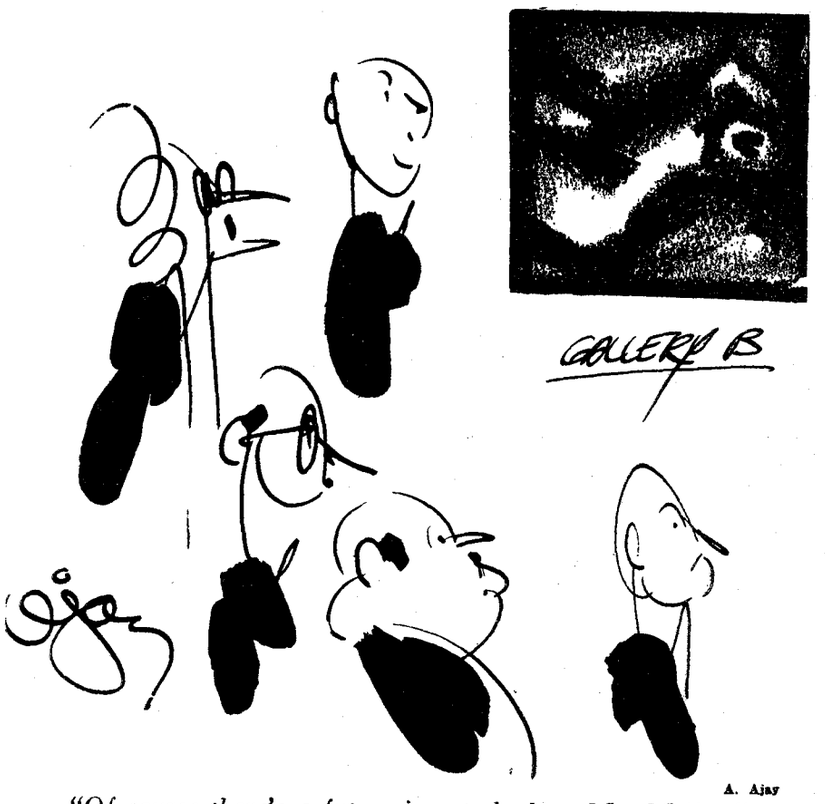
Power is the story of the struggle of the consumer against the utlities monopolies, and of the partial victory in that battle represented by the Tennessee Valley Authority and its functioning as a rate yardstick. The economics of capital-concentration, the brazenness of holding-company trustification and sharp practice, are told with great graphic effect, with keen human interest, and with delicious humor. There is an unseen Voice that lectures the Consumer and engages in debate with the spokesmen for the power interests. There is abundant experimental (and successful) use of cinema projection doubled with stage action; of stage setting projected in stills upon flat backdrop (question: how would three-dimensional stereoscopic projection key things up along this line?), using both photos, as in connection with Senate speeches, and line drawings in color when satiric or other distortional effects were desired; there is a wealth of newspaper quotation and statistical material, handled frequently through human situations so that the effect is somewhat that of the figures on a "Vienna chart" come to life. The whole political tone of the play is pretty much to whoop it up for the federal government as the hero and against the utilities as the villains, but there is no mincing matters as to how militantly (and sometimes, in the technical sense, illegally) the consumers on the countryside fight their own battles. There is something of a lapse in effectiveness in the second act (there are but two), where the question of Supreme Court action on the T.V.A. project is brought out. And while this curtain situation is highly topical, raising the question of how the Court will decide a remaining important case, it is dramatically less potent that what has gone before, just because it merely raises a question the answering of which seems to be a matter which no one onstage can take part in.

Taken as a whole, however, the Living Newspaper can be proud of *Power.* Managing Producer Morris Watson, Author Arthur Arent, Designer Howard Bay, Director Brett Warren, Composer Lee Wainer, Actor Norman Lloyd (who plays the Consumer), and the many others who contributed their share have done a stirring job in the social theatre, and one which will make theatrical as well as social history.

Another W.P.A. play, produced by the Popular Price Theatre, is *The Sun and I,* by Barrie and Leona Stavis, which tells in some sort the story of the Biblical Joseph who lived to be Egypt's No. 1 Brain Truster. This is also a better-than-average evening in the theater, and lest that seem faint praise, it is both funny and shrewd, and moves with animation and suspense. Unfortunately, it embarks on critical commentary on social forces and on statecraft, and here it must be said that it introduces some romantic and muddled concepts which are not entirely saved by some pre-final-curtain lines which attempt in a purely verbal and non-dramatic way to state the rôle of the popular masses in guiding the course of history into permanently fruitful channels. Such a method of presenting what appears to be the authors' viewpoint must lack in effectiveness when placed in context with a powerful scene of what appears to be regimentation with a benign purpose, in which slaves on a virtual treadmill groan at their labor and engage in a romantically abortive revolt before a set in which the dominant element is a granary bearing a close, if purely fortuitous, resemblance to the tomb of Lenin.

Special honors must be reserved for the writing of the rôle of Pharaoh and the acting of it by Frederic Tozere, and for the settings designed under the supervision of Tom Adrian Cracraft.

Broadway's offering this week is *Having Wonderful Time,* produced and directed by Marc Connelly and written by Arthur Kober. This is a story of the rough road of true young love at a summer vacation camp in the Berkshires, and the roughness of the road is not altogether because of triangularities in relationships (although these are pleasingly enlarged into quadrangularities by Mr. Kober), but mainly because of dat ol' davil unemployment. The things about this comedy that take it out of the ruck of ordinary summer-vacation trifles are Mr. Kober's recognition of unemployment as a basic conditioner of the path of young love today, and his unusually keen observation of character and of the pattern of emotion and speech. Together, he and Mr. Connelly have distilled delicate nuance after delicate nuance, so that the whole thing simply charms. Chalk up a dodge on the part of the author, however, and one which does some disservice to his play: the happy ending is



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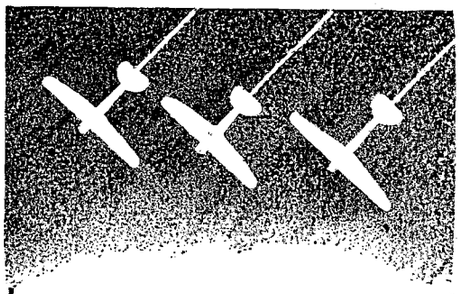

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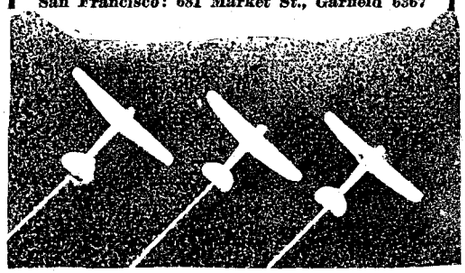

achieved by implication rather than by fact; and this is the worse because it is the basic obstacle, unemployment, that is left unmounted in any definitive sense. Too sensible to settle that problem by any happy chance that irons everything out and that therefore would be untrue, the author winds up his play with the two young folks getting together at last, and deciding happily to "talk things over." Unfortunately, that is not always a solution for unemployment.

The acting company is well balanced and strikes a high average of competence. The leading rôles are really memorable in their rendering by Katherine Locke and Jules Garfield.

Last week we promised a survey of audience opinion on *Marching Song*. We offer our apologies for having to postpone it a week, a postponement which was made imperative by the inclusion in this issue of the interview with André Malraux. ALEXANDER TAYLOR.

THE SCREEN

PRISONERS, the new Soviet film at the New York Cameo, is more valuable as a social document—as a revelation of Soviet criminology—than a contribution to cinematography. That there have been better Soviet films is an obvious fact; that several of the current American films surpass it technically no one will deny. But this new film, which dramatizes the construction of the famous Baltic-White Sea Canal (completed in 1933) has genuineness and psychological insight—something even the best Hollywood films hardly achieve. A great deal of the film's power lies in the usual brilliance of the Russian actors. The real reason, however, is in the scenario and the material it dramatizes. While *Prisoners* is billed as an adaptation of Pogodin's play *Aristocrats*, it would be more accurate to say that both the play and the film are based on Pogodin's experiences as a resident in the "prison camp," which in turn gave birth to the short story or literary scenario "Prisoners," published in English translation in *International Literature*, No. 3, 1934.

With great skill and economy, Nikolai Pogodin gives us a vivid picture of a great feat in social engineering—the rehabilitation of criminal and political prisoners. This is a picture that is exactly opposite of that drawn in Fritz Lang's *You Only Live Once*. These "reforged" prisoners told their own vivid stories, in *Belomor*, published by Smith & Haas in 1935.

Alfred Hitchcock, England's brilliant director, contributes another study in criminology and Scotland Yard adventures in *The Woman Alone* (Gaumont-British). It is based on Conrad's *The Secret Agent*, that despicable anti-revolutionary novel about Anarchists. We are grateful to Mr. Hitchcock for discarding these elements in the Conrad novel. The scenarist used several of the basic incidents of the novel, and manufactured a story of saboteurs (they are not identified with any government or class) who for some reason or other want to throw London into a panic. It is a thoroughly synthetic job about a young Scotland Yard agent (John Loder) who attempts to track down the agents of the saboteurs. There are three sequences in this film that are better than anything Hitchcock has ever done. The first is where Mr. Verloc (Oscar Homolka) goes from his home to the Aquarium to meet the leader of the gang. Using cleverly photographed shots with natural sounds (without incidental music) and clever cutting, the director builds up tremendous suspense. The second sequence is in the use of Walt Disney's cartoon, *Who Killed Cock Robin?* to illustrate Mrs. Verloc's (Sylvia Sidney) reaction to the death of her little brother by the criminal's bomb. The last is when Miss Sidney is running through the street and a boy is seen running toward her. Just as she passes the kid, the director cuts in a shot of her dead brother. Turning around, she sees the face of a strange boy.

Although I don't remember Hitchcock's silent films, I have seen all his sound films. Every one of them has been a "mystery"-secret-agent-Scotland Yard. But in his recent films, in *39 Steps*, and in *The Woman Alone*, Hitchcock has shown that he has a feeling for dramatizing the peasant and the English common man. No doubt the British industry feels secure in Mr. Hitchcock's technical brilliance. But unless that brilliance can be turned to less synthetic forms, it will in time wear off and become an affectation. The cast as a whole is very good, but Miss Sidney's work is outstanding. She manages to make Mrs. Verloc a very sympathetic and warm human being.

While *Things to Come* was released last season, *The Man Who Could Work Miracles* (London Films-United Artists) is H. G. Wells's first adventure in motion pictures as a scenarist. Like *The Invisible Man*, this new film is about a man who suddenly is divinely empowered to work miracles. Except for the prologue and epilogue, where Mr. Wells's infantile-philosophic economics gets in the way, the film is pretty good fun and mildly stimulating. Roland Young, as George McWhirter Fotheringay, is his usual brilliant self. For the rest, the film provides a grand holiday for Ned Mann — the special-effects authority. Lothar Mendes's direction is unimaginative, and the cutting (both in image and sound) is clumsy.

John Meade's Woman (Paramount) is another film in which Edward Arnold is cast as the big bad capitalist who has a tragic love life. *When You're in Love* (Columbia) is Robert Riskin's first film as writer-director. Coming from the man who wrote *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town*, and who has worked together with Frank Capra, this film is a disappointment. It is a typical Grace Moore light-opera music film with a touch of Cab Calloway. But then, Lily Pons did that some months ago. *The Last of Mrs. Cheyney* (M.G.M.) is a remake of the old-fashioned sophisticated-crook melodrama. Although it boasts of William Powell and Joan Crawford, the 1929 version with Norma Shearer is more memorable. *Man of Affairs* (Gaumont-British) is a British im-

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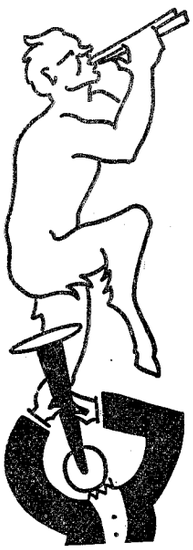

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Farm Problems. "Spring Financing with Coöperative Credit," by W. I. Myers, governor of the Farm Credit Administration, Mon., March 8, 1:30 p.m. Columbia.

Civil Liberties. Freedom of speech and how it was obtained will be dramatized during the weekly "Let Freedom Ring" program of the U. S. Education Office. Mon., March 8, 10:30 p.m. Columbia.

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The Plough and the Stars. Pretty satisfactory cinematizing of Sean O'Casey's play.

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PLAYS

Marching Song (Bayes, N. Y.). The Theatre Union's strong production of John Howard Lawson's play about an auto strike and other things.

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Steel (Labor Stage, N. Y.). Reviving John Wexley's drama of union men and company thugs.

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